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MARMION.

CANTO SIXTH.

THE BATTLE.

I.

WHILE great events were on the gale,
And each hour brought a varying tale,
And the demeanour, changed and cold,
Of Douglas, fretted Marmion bold,
And, like the impatient steed of war,
He snuff'd the battle from afar;
And hopes were none, that back again
Herald should come from Terouenne,
Where England's King in leaguer lay,
Before decisive battle-day;
Whilst these things were, the mournful Clare
Did in the Dame's devotions share:
For the good Countess ceaseless pray'd
To Heaven and Saints, her sons to aid,
And, with short interval, did pass
From prayer to book, from book to mass,
And all in high Baronial pride,—
A life both dull and dignified;—
Yet as Lord Marmion nothing press'd
Upon her intervals of rest,
Dejected Clara well could bear
The formal state, the lengthen'd prayer,
Though dearest to her wounded heart
The hours that she might spend apart.

II.

I said, Tantallon's dizzy steep
Hung o'er the margin of the deep.

Many a rude tower and rampart there
Repell'd the insult of the air,
Which, when the tempest vex'd the sky,
Half breeze, half spray, came whistling by.
Above the rest, a turret square
Did o'er its Gothic entrance bear,
Of sculpture rude, a stony shield;
The Bloody Heart was in the Field,
And in the chief three mullets stood,
The cognizance of Douglas blood.
The turret held a narrow stair,
Which, mounted, gave you access where
A parapet's embattled row
Did seaward round the castle go.
Sometimes in dizzy steps descending,
Sometimes in narrow circuit bending,
Sometimes in platform broad extending,
Its varying circle did combine
Bulwark, and bartizan, and line,
And bastion, tower, and vantage-coign;
Above the booming ocean leant
The far-projecting battlement;
The billows burst, in ceaseless flow,
Upon the precipice below.
Where'er Tantallon faced the land,
Gate-works, and walls, were strongly mann'd,
No need upon the sea-girt side;
The steepy rock, and frantic tide,
Approach of human step denied;
And thus these lines and ramparts rude.
Were left in deepest solitude.

III.

And, for they were so lonely, Clare
Would to these battlements repair,
And muse upon her sorrows there,
  And list the sea-bird's cry;
Or slow, like noontide ghost, would glide
Along the dark-grey bulwarks' side,
And ever on the heaving tide
  Look down with weary eye.
Oft did the cliff and swelling main,

Recall the thoughts of Whitby's fane,—
A home she ne'er might see again ;
For she had laid adown,
So Douglas bade, the hood and veil,
And frontlet of the cloister pale,
And Benedictine gown :
It were unseemly sight, he said,
A novice out of convent shade.—
Now her bright locks, with sunny glow,
Again adorn'd her brow of snow ;
Her mantle rich, whose borders, round,
A deep and fretted broidery bound,
In golden foldings sought the ground ;
Of holy ornament, alone
Remain'd a cross with ruby stone ;
And often did she look
On that which in her hand she bore,
With velvet bound, and broider'd o'er
Her breviary book.
In such a place, so lone, so grim,
At dawning pale, or twilight dim,
It fearful would have been
To meet a form so richly dress'd,
With book in hand, and cross on breast,
And such a woeful mien.
Fitz-Eustace, loitering with his bow,
To practise on the gull and crow,
Saw her, at distance, gliding slow,
And did by Mary swear,—
Some love-lorn Fay she might have been,
Or, in Romance, some spell-bound Queen ;
For ne'er, in work-day world, was seen
A form so witching fair.

IV.

Once walking thus, at evening tide,
It chanced a gliding sail she spied,
And, sighing, thought—" The Abbess, there,
Perchance, does to her home repair ;
Her peaceful rule, where Duty, free,
Walks hand in hand with Charity ;
Where oft Devotion's tranced glow

Can such a glimpse of heaven bestow,
That the enraptured sisters see
High vision and deep mystery ;
The very form of Hilda fair,
Hovering upon the sunny air,
And smiling on her votaries' prayer.
O ! wherefore, to my duller eye,
Did still the Saint her form deny !
Was it, that, sear'd by sinful scorn,
My heart could neither melt nor burn ?
Or lie my warm affections low,
With him, that taught them first to glow ?
Yet, gentle Abbess, well I knew,
To pay thy kindness grateful due,
And well could brook the mild command,
That ruled thy simple maiden band.
How different now ! condemn'd to bide
My doom from this dark tyrant's pride.—
But Marmion has to learn, ere long,
That constant mind, and hate of wrong,
Descended to a feeble girl,
From Red De Clare, stout Gloster's Earl :
Of such a stem, a sapling weak,
He ne'er shall bend, although he break.

V.

"But see !—what makes this armour here ?"—
For in her path there lay
Targe, corslet, helm ;—she view'd them near.—
"The breast-plate pierced !—Ay, much I fear,
Weak fence wert thou 'gainst foeman's spear,
That hath made fatal entrance here,
As these dark blood-gouts say.—
Thus Wilton !—Oh ! not corslet's ward,
Not truth, as diamond pure and hard,
Could be thy manly bosom's guard,
On yon disastrous day !"—
She raised her eyes in mournful mood,—
WILTON himself before her stood !
It might have seem'd his passing ghost,
For every youthful grace was lost ;
And joy unwonted, and surprise,

Gave their strange wildness to his eyes.—
Expect not, noble dames and lords,
That I can tell such scene in words:
What skilful limner e'er would choose
To paint the rainbow's varying hues,
Unless to mortal it were given
To dip his brush in dyes of heaven?
Far less can my weak line declare
  Each changing passion's shade;
Brightening to rapture from despair,
Sorrow, surprise, and pity there,
And joy, with her angelic air,
And hope, that paints the future fair,
  Their varying hues display'd:
Each o'er its rival's ground extending,
Alternate conquering, shifting, blending,
Till all, fatigued, the conflict yield,
And mighty Love retains the field.
Shortly I tell what then he said,
By many a tender word delay'd,
And modest blush, and bursting sigh,
And question kind, and fond reply:—

VI.

DE WILTON'S HISTORY.

"Forget we that disastrous day,
When senseless in the lists I lay.
  Thence dragg'd,—but how I cannot know,
    For sense and recollection fled,—
  I found me on a pallet low,
    Within my ancient beadsman's shed.
  Austin,—remember'st thou, my Clare,
How thou didst blush, when the old man,
When first our infant love began,
  Said we would make a matchless pair?—
Menials, and friends, and kinsmen fled
From the degraded traitor's bed,—
He only held my burning head,
And tended me for many a day,
While wounds and fever held their sway.
But far more needful was his care,

When sense return'd to wake despair;
For I did tear the closing wound,
And dash me frantic on the ground,
If e'er I heard the name of Clare.
At length, to calmer reason brought,
Much by his kind attendance wrought,
With him I left my native strand,
And, in a palmer's weeds array'd,
My hated name and form to shade,
I journey'd many a land;
No more a lord of rank and birth,
But mingled with the dregs of earth.
Oft Austin for my reason fear'd,
When I would sit, and deeply brood
On dark revenge, and deeds of blood,
Or wild mad schemes uprear'd.
My friend at length fell sick, and said,
God would remove him soon:
And, while upon his dying bed,
He begg'd of me a boon—
If e'er my deadliest enemy
Beneath my brand should conquer'd lie,
Even then my mercy should awake,
And spare his life for Austin's sake.

VII.

"Still restless as a second Cain,
To Scotland next my route was ta'en,
Full well the paths I knew.
Fame of my fate made various sound,
That death in pilgrimage I found,
That I had perish'd of my wound,—
None cared which tale was true:
And living eye could never guess
De Wilton in his Palmer's dress;
For now that sable slough is shed,
And trimm'd my shaggy beard and head,
I scarcely know me in the glass.
A chance most wondrous did provide,
That I should be that Baron's guide—
I will not name his name!—
Vengeance to God alone belongs;

To Surrey's camp to ride;
He had safe conduct for his band,
Beneath the royal seal and hand,
And Douglas gave a guide:
The ancient Earl, with stately grace,
Would Clara on her palfrey place,
And whisper'd in an under tone,
"Let the hawk stoop, his prey is flown."—
The train from out the castle drew,
But Marmion stopp'd to bid adieu:—
"Though something I might plain," he said,
"Of cold respect to stranger guest,
Sent hither by your King's behest,
While in Tantallon's towers I staid;
Part we in friendship from your land,
And, noble Earl, receive my hand."—
But Douglas round him drew his cloak,
Folded his arms, and thus he spoke:—
"My manors, halls, and bowers, shall still
Be open, at my Sovereign's will,
To each one whom he lists, howe'er
Unmeet to be the owner's peer.
My castles are my King's alone,
From turret to foundation-stone—
The hand of Douglas is his own;
And never shall in friendly grasp
The hand of such as Marmion clasp."—

XIV.

Burn'd Marmion's swarthy cheek like fire,
And shook his very frame for ire,
And—"This to me!" he said,—
"An 'twere not for thy hoary beard,
Such hand as Marmion's had not spared
To cleave the Douglas' head!
And, first, I tell thee, haughty Peer,
He, who does England's message here,
Although the meanest in her state,
May well, proud Angus, be thy mate:
And, Douglas, more I tell thee here,
Even in thy pitch of pride,
Here in thy hold, thy vassals near,

(Nay, never look upon your lord,
And lay your hands upon your sword,)
I tell thee, thou'rt defied !
And if thou said'st I am not peer
To any lord in Scotland here,
Lowland or Highland, far or near,
Lord Angus, thou hast lied ! "—
On the Earl's cheek the flush of rage
O'ercame the ashen hue of age :
Fierce he broke forth,—" And darest thou then
To beard the lion in his den,
The Douglas in his hall ?
And hopest thou hence unscathed to go ?—
No, by Saint Bride of Bothwell, no !
Up drawbridge, grooms—what, Warder, ho !
Let the portcullis fall."—
Lord Marmion turn'd,—well was his need,
And dash'd the rowels in his steed,
Like arrow through the archway sprung,
The ponderous grate behind him rung :
To pass there was such scanty room,
The bars, descending, razed his plume.

XV.

The steed along the drawbridge flies,
Just as it trembled on the rise ;
Nor lighter does the swallow skim
Along the smooth lake's level brim :
And when Lord Marmion reach'd his band,
He halts, and turns with clenched hand,
And shout of loud defiance pours,
And shook his gauntlet at the towers.
" Horse ! horse !" the Douglas cried, " and chase !"
But soon he rein'd his fury's pace :
" A royal messenger he came,
Though most unworthy of the name.—
A letter forged ! Saint Jude to speed !
Did ever knight so foul a deed !
At first in heart it liked me ill,
When the king praised his clerkly skill.
Thanks to Saint Bothan, son of mine,
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line :

So swore I, and I swear it still,
Let my boy-bishop fret his fill.—
Saint Mary mend my fiery mood!
Old age ne'er cools the Douglas blood,
I thought to slay him where he stood.
'Tis pity of him too," he cried:
"Bold can he speak, and fairly ride,
I warrant him a warrior tried."
With this his mandate he recalls,
And slowly seeks his castle halls.

XVI.

The day in Marmion's journey wore;
Yet, ere his passion's gust was o'er,
They cross'd the heights of Stanrig-moor.
His troop more closely there he scann'd,
And miss'd the Palmer from the band.—
"Palmer or not," young Blount did say,
"He parted at the peep of day;
Good sooth, it was in strange array."—
"In what array?" said Marmion, quick.
"My Lord, I ill can spell the trick;
But all night long, with clink and bang,
Close to my couch did hammers clang;
At dawn the falling drawbridge rang,
And from a loop-hole while I peep,
Old Bell-the-Cat came from the Keep,
Wrapp'd in a gown of sables fair,
As fearful of the morning air;
Beneath, when that was blown aside,
A rusty shirt of mail I spied,
By Archibald won in bloody work,
Against the Saracen and Turk:
Last night it hung not in the hall;
I thought some marvel would befall.
And next I saw them saddled lead
Old Cheviot forth, the Earl's best steed;
A matchless horse, though something old,
Prompt in his paces, cool and bold.
I heard the Sheriff Sholto say,
The Earl did much the Master pray
To use him on the battle-day;

cool - which does not easily get exc[...]
Sheriff - lit an officer whose du[...]
that the

But he preferr'd"——"Nay, Henry, cease !
Thou, sworn horse-courser, hold thy peace.—
Eustace, thou bear'st a brain—I pray,
What did Blount see at break of day ?"—

XVII.

"In brief, my Lord, we both descried
(For then I stood by Henry's side)
The Palmer mount, and outwards ride,
  Upon the Earl's own favourite steed :
All sheathed he was in armour bright,
And much resembled that same knight,
Subdued by you in Cotswold fight :
  Lord Angus wish'd him speed."—
The instant that Fitz-Eustace spoke,
A sudden light on Marmion broke ;—
"Ah ! dastard fool, to reason lost !"
He mutter'd ; "'Twas nor fay nor ghost
I met upon the moonlight wold,
But living man of earthly mould.—
  O dotage blind and gross !
Had I but fought as wont, one thrust
Had laid De Wilton in the dust,
My path no more to cross.—
How stand we now ?—he told his tale
To Douglas ; and with some avail ;
  'Twas therefore gloom'd his rugged brow.—
Will Surrey dare to entertain,
'Gainst Marmion, charge disproved and vain ?
  Small risk of that, I trow.
Yet Clare's sharp questions must I shun ;
Must separate Constance from the Nun—
O, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive !
A Palmer too !—no wonder why
I felt rebuked beneath his eye :
I might have known there was but one,
Whose look could quell Lord Marmion."

XVIII.

Stung with these thoughts, he urged to speed
His troop, and reach'd, at eve, the Tweed,

Around the base of Flodden hill.

XXI.

Ere yet the bands met Marmion's eye,
Fitz-Eustace shouted loud and high,
" Hark ! hark ! my lord, an English drum !
And see ascending squadrons come
Between Tweed's river and the hill,
Foot, horse, and cannon :—hap what hap,
My basnet to a prentice cap,
Lord Surrey's o'er the Till !—
Yet more ! yet more !—how far array'd
They file from out the hawthorn shade,
And sweep so gallant by !
With all their banners bravely spread,
And all their armour flashing high,
Saint George might waken from the dead,
To see fair England's standards fly."—
" Stint in thy prate," quoth Blount, " thou'dst best,
And listen to our lord's behest."—
With kindling brow Lord Marmion said,—
" This instant be our band array'd ;
The river must be quickly cross'd,
That we may join Lord Surrey's host.
If fight King James,—as well I trust,
That fight he will, and fight he must,—
The Lady Clare behind our lines
Shall tarry, while the battle joins."

XXII.

Himself he swift on horseback threw,
Scarce to the Abbot bade adieu ;
Far less would listen to his prayer,
To leave behind the helpless Clare.
Down to the Tweed his band he drew,
And mutter'd as the flood they view,
" The pheasant in the falcon's claw,
He scarce will yield to please a daw :
Lord Angus may the Abbot awe,
So Clare shall bide with me."
Then on that dangerous ford, and deep,
Where to the Tweed Leat's eddies creep,

He ventured desperately :
And not a moment will he bide,
Till squire, or groom, before him ride ;
Headmost of all he stems the tide,
And stems it gallantly.
Eustace held Clare upon her horse,
Old Hubert led her rein,
Stoutly they braved the current's course,
And, though far downward driven per force,
The southern bank they gain ;
Behind them straggling, came to shore,
As best they might, the train :
Each o'er his head his yew-bow bore,
A caution not in vain ;
Deep need that day that every string,
By wet unharm'd, should sharply ring.
A moment then Lord Marmion staid,
And breathed his steed, his men array'd,
Then forward moved his band,
Until, Lord Surrey's rear-guard won,
He halted by a Cross of Stone,
That, on a hillock standing lone,
Did all the field command.

XXIII.

Hence might they see the full array
Of either host, for deadly fray ;
Their marshall'd lines stretch'd east and west,
And fronted north and south,
And distant salutation pass'd
From the loud cannon mouth ;
Not in the close successive rattle,
That breathes the voice of modern battle,
But slow and far between.—
The hillock gain'd, Lord Marmion staid :
"Here, by this Cross," he gently said,
"You well may view the scene.
Here shalt thou tarry, lovely Clare :
O ! think of Marmion in thy prayer !—
Thou wilt not ?—well,—no less my care
Shall, watchful, for thy weal prepare.—
You, Blount and Eustace, are her guard,

With ten pick'd archers of my train;
With England if the day go hard,
To Berwick speed amain.—
But if we conquer, cruel maid,
My spoils shall at your feet be laid,
When here we meet again."
He waited not for answer there,
And would not mark the maid's despair,
Nor heed the discontented look
From either squire; but spurr'd amain,
And, dashing through the battle plain,
His way to Surrey took.

XXIV.

"—— The good Lord Marmion, by my life!
Welcome to danger's hour!—
Short greeting serves in time of strife:—
Thus have I ranged my power:
Myself will rule this central host,
Stout Stanley fronts their right,
My sons command the vaward post,
With Brian Tunstall, stainless knight;
Lord Dacre, with his horsemen light,
Shall be in rear-ward of the fight,
And succour those that need it most.
Now, gallant Marmion, well I know
Would gladly to the vanguard go;
Edmond, the Admiral, Tunstall there,
With the their charge will blithely share;
There fight thine own retainers too,
Beneath De Burg, thy steward true."—
"Thanks, noble Surrey!" Marmion said,
Nor farther greeting there he paid;
But, parting like a thunderbolt,
First in the vanguard made a halt,
Where such a shout there rose
Of "Marmion! Marmion!" that the cry,
Up Flodden mountain shrilling high,
Startled the Scottish foes.

XXV.

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still

With Lady Clare upon the hill;
On which, (for far the day was spent,)
The western sunbeams now were bent.
The cry they heard, its meaning knew,
Could plain their distant comrades view:
Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,
"Unworthy office here to stay!
No hope of gilded spurs to-day.—
But see! look up—on Flodden bent
The Scottish foe has fired his tent.
And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till,
Was wreathed in sable smoke.
Volumed and fast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,
As down the hill they broke;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march; their tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain-throne
King James did rushing come.—
Scarce could they hear, or see their foes,
Until at weapon-point they close.—
They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust;
And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air;
O life and death were in the shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair.
Long look'd the anxious squires; their eye
Could in the darkness nought descry.

XXVI.

At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast;
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears;

And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.
Then mark'd they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumed crests of chieftains brave,
Floating like foam upon the wave;
But nought distinct they see:
Wide raged the battle on the plain;
Spears shook, and falchions flash'd amain;
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
Crests rose, and stoop'd, and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.
Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly:
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
Still bear them bravely in the fight:
Although against them come,
Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn Badenoch-man,
And many a rugged Border clan,
With Huntly, and with Home.

XXVII.

Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle;
Though there the western mountaineer
Rush'd with bare bosom on the spear,
And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broadsword plied.
'Twas vain:—But Fortune, on the right,
With fickle smile, cheer'd Scotland's fight.
Then fell that spotless banner white,
The Howard's lion fell;
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
Around the battle-yell.
The Border slogan rent the sky!
A Home! a Gordon! was the cry:
Loud were the clanging blows;
Advanced,—forced back,—now low, now high,
The pennon sunk and rose;

As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
It waver'd 'mid the foes.
No longer Blount the view could bear:
"By Heaven, and all its saints! I swear
I will not see it lost!
Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare
May bid your beads, and patter prayer,—
I gallop to the host."
And to the fray he rode amain,
Follow'd by all the archer train.
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,
Made, for a space, an opening large,—
The rescued banner rose,—
But darkly closed the war around,
Like pine-tree, rooted from the ground,
It sunk among the foes.
Then Eustace mounted too:—yet staid
As loath to leave the helpless maid,
When, fast as shaft can fly,
Blood-shot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
The loose rein dangling from his head,
Housing and saddle bloody red,
Lord Marmion's steed rush'd by;
And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
A look and sign to Clara cast
To mark he would return in haste,
Then plunged into the fight.

XXVIII.

Ask me not what the maiden feels,
Left in that dreadful hour alone:
Perchance her reason stoops, or reels;
Perchance a courage, not her own,
Braces her mind to desperate tone.—
The scatter'd van of England wheels;—
She only said, as loud in air
The tumult roar'd, "Is Wilton there?"—
They fly, or, madden'd by despair,
Fight but to die,—"Is Wilton there?"
With that, straight up the hill there rode
Two horsemen drench'd with gore,

And in their arms, a helpless load,
  A wounded knight they bore.
His hand still strain'd the broken brand;
His arms were smear'd with blood and sand:
Dragg'd from among the horses' feet,
With dinted shield, and helmet beat,
The falcon-crest and plumage gone,
Can that be haughty Marmion! . . .
Young Blount his armour did unlace,
And, gazing on his ghastly face,
  Said—"By Saint George, he's gone!
That spear-wound has our master sped,
And see the deep cut on his head!
  Good-night to Marmion."—
"Unnurtured Blount! thy brawling cease:
He opes his eyes," said Eustace; "peace!"

XXIX.

When, doff'd his casque, he felt free air,
Around 'gan Marmion wildly stare:—
"Where's Harry Blount? Fitz-Eustace where?
Linger ye here, ye hearts of hare!
Redeem my pennon,—charge again!
Cry—'Marmion to the rescue!'—Vain!
Last of my race, on battle-plain
That shout shall ne'er be heard again!—
Yet my last thought is England's—fly,
  To Dacre bear my signet-ring:
  Tell him his squadrons up to bring.—
Fitz-Eustace, to Lord Surrey hie;
Tunstall lies dead upon the field,
His life-blood stains the spotless shield:
  Edmund is down:—my life is reft;
  The Admiral alone is left.
  Let Stanley charge with spur of fire,—
  With Chester charge, and Lancashire,
  Full upon Scotland's central host,
  Or victory and England's lost.—
  Must I bid twice?—hence, varlets! fly!
  Leave Marmion here alone—to die."
  They parted, and alone he lay;
  Clare drew her from the sight away,

Till pain wrung forth a lowly moan,
And half he murmur'd,—" Is there none,
Of all my halls have nurst,
Page, squire, or groom, one cup to bring
Of blessed water from the spring,
To slake my dying thirst!"

XXX.

O, Woman! in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
And variable as the shade
By the light quivering aspen made;
When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering angel thou!—
Scarce were the piteous accents said,
When, with the Baron's casque, the maid
To the nigh streamlet ran:
Forgot were hatred, wrongs, and fears;
The plaintive voice alone she hears,
Sees but the dying man.
She stoop'd her by the runnel's side,
But in abhorrence backward drew;
For, oozing from the mountain's side,
Where raged the war, a dark-red tide
Was curdling in the streamlet blue.
Where shall she turn?—behold her mark
A little fountain cell,
Where water, clear as diamond-spark,
In a stone basin fell.
Above, some half-worn letters say,
Drink. weary. pilgrim. drink. and. pray.
For. the. kind. soul. of. Sybil. Grey.
Who. built. this. cross. and. well.
She fill'd the helm, and back she hied,
And with surprise and joy espied
A monk supporting Marmion's head:
A pious man, whom duty brought
To dubious verge of battle fought,
To shrieve the dying, bless the dead.

XXXI.

Deep drank Lord Marmion of the wave,

And, as she stoop'd his brow to lave—
"Is it the hand of Clare," he said,
"Or injured Constance, bathes my head?"
Then, as remembrance rose,—
"Speak not to me of shrift or prayer!
I must redress her woes.
Short space, few words, are mine to spare;
Forgive and listen, gentle Clare!"—
"Alas!" she said, "the while,—
O, think of your immortal weal!
In vain for Constance is your zeal;
She—died at Holy Isle."—
Lord Marmion started from the ground,
As light as if he felt no wound;
Though in the action burst the tide,
In torrents, from his wounded side.
"Then it was truth,"—he said—"I knew
That the dark presage must be true.—
I would the Fiend, to whom belongs
The vengeance due to all her wrongs,
Would spare me but a day!
For wasting fire, and dying groan,
And priests slain on the altar stone,
Might bribe him for delay.
It may not be!—this dizzy trance—
Curse on yon base marauder's lance,
And doubly cursed my failing brand!
A sinful heart makes feeble hand."
Then, fainting, down on earth he sunk,
Supported by the trembling Monk.

XXXII.

With fruitless labour, Clara bound,
And strove to stanch the gushing wound:
The Monk, with unavailing cares,
Exhausted all the Church's prayers.
Ever, he said, that, close and near,
A lady's voice was in his ear,
And that the priest he could not hear;
For that she ever sung,

"*In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,*
Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the dying!"
So the notes rung;—
"Avoid thee, Fiend!—with cruel hand,
Shake not the dying sinner's sand!—
O, look, my son, upon yon sign
Of the Redeemer's grace divine;
O, think on faith and bliss!—
By many a death-bed I have been,
And many a sinner's parting seen,
But never aught like this."—
The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swell'd the gale,
And—Stanley! was the cry;
A light on Marmion's visage spread,
And fired his glazing eye:
With dying hand, above his head,
He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted "Victory!—
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"
Were the last words of Marmion.

XXXIII.

By this, though deep the evening fell,
Still rose the battle's deadly swell,
For still the Scots, around their King,
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.
Where's now their victor vaward wing,
Where Huntly, and where Home?—
O, for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Rowland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died!
Such blast might warn them, not in vain,
To quit the plunder of the slain,
And turn the doubtful day again,
While yet on Flodden side,
Afar, the Royal Standard flies,
And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies,
Our Caledonian pride!

In vain the wish—for far away,
While spoil and havoc mark their way,
Near Sybil's Cross the plunderers stray.—
"O, Lady," cried the Monk, "away!"
And placed her on her steed,
And led her to the chapel fair,
Of Tilmouth upon Tweed.
There all the night they spent in prayer,
And at the dawn of morning, there
She met her kinsman, Lord Fitz-Clare.

XXXIV.

But as they left the dark'ning heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hail'd
In headlong charge their horse assail'd;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their King.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spear-men still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded King.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shatter'd bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know;
Their King, their Lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow.

Dissolves in silent dew.
Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band,
Disorder'd, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;
To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.
Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong:
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield!

XXXV.

Day dawns upon the mountain's side:—
There, Scotland! lay thy bravest pride,
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one:
The sad survivors all are gone.—
View not that corpse mistrustfully,
Defaced and mangled though it be;
Nor to yon Border castle high,
Look northward with upbraiding eye;
Nor cherish hope in vain,
That, journeying far on foreign strand,
The Royal Pilgrim to his land
May yet return again.
He saw the wreck his rashness wrought;
Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
And fell on Flodden plain:
And well in death his trusty brand,
Firm clench'd within his manly hand,
Beseem'd the monarch slain.
But, O! how changed since yon blithe night!—
Gladly I turn me from the sight,
Unto my tale again.

XXXVI.

Short is my tale: Fitz-Eustace' care
A pierced and mangled body bare

To moated Lichfield's lofty pile ;
And there, beneath the southern aisle
A tomb, with Gothic sculpture fair,
Did long Lord Marmion's image bear.
(Now vainly for its sight you look ;
'Twas levell'd when fanatic Brook
The fair cathedral storm'd and took ;
But, thanks to Heaven and good Saint Chad,
A guerdon meet the spoiler had !)
There erst was martial Marmion found,
His feet upon a couchant hound,
His hands to heaven upraised ;
And all around, on scutcheon rich,
And tablet carved, and fretted niche,
His arms and feats were blazed.
And yet, though all was carved so fair,
And priest for Marmion breathed the prayer,
The last Lord Marmion lay not there.
From Ettrick woods a peasant swain
Follow'd his lord to Flodden plain,—
One of those flowers, whom plaintive lay
In Scotland mourns as " wede away :"
Sore wounded, Sybil's Cross he spied,
And dragg'd him to its foot, and died,
Close by the noble Marmion's side.
The spoilers stripp'd and gash'd the slain,
And thus their corpses were mista'en ;
And thus, in the proud Baron's tomb,
The lowly woodsman took the room.

XXXVII.

Less easy task it were, to show
Lord Marmion's nameless grave, and low.
They dug his grave e'en where he lay,
But every mark is gone ;
Time's wasting hand has done away
The simple Cross of Sybil Grey,
And broke her font of stone :
But yet from out the little hill
Oozes the slender springlet still.
Oft halts the stranger there,
For thence may best his curious eye

The memorable field descry ;
And shepherd boys repair
To seek the water-flag and rush,
And rest them by the hazel bush,
And plait their garlands fair ;
Nor dream they sit upon the grave,
That holds the bones of Marmion brave.—
When thou shalt find the little hill,
With thy heart commune, and be still.
If ever, in temptation strong,
Thou left'st the right path for the wrong ;
If every devious step, thus trod,
Still led thee farther from the road ;
Dread thou to speak presumptuous doom
On noble Marmion's lowly tomb ;
But say, "He died a gallant knight,
With sword in hand, for England's right."

XXXVIII.

I do not rhyme to that dull elf,
Who cannot image to himself,
That all through Flodden's dismal night,
Wilton was foremost in the fight ;
That, when brave Surrey's steed was slain,
'Twas Wilton mounted him again ;
'Twas Wilton's brand that deepest hew'd,
Amid the spearmen's stubborn wood :
Unnamed by Hollinshed or Hall,
He was the living soul of all ;
That, after fight, his faith made plain,
He won his rank and lands again ;
And charged his old paternal shield
With bearings won on Flodden Field.
Nor sing I to that simple maid,
To whom it must in terms be said,
That King and kinsmen did agree,
To bless fair Clara's constancy ;
Who cannot, unless I relate,
Paint to her mind the bridal's state ;
That Wolsey's voice the blessing spoke,
More, Sands, and Denny, pass'd the joke :
That bluff King Hal the curtain drew,

And Catherine's hand the stocking threw ;
And afterwards, for many a day,
That it was held enough to say,
In blessing to a wedded pair,
" Love they like Wilton and like Clare !"

THE SON OF CRŒSUS.

ARGUMENT.

Crœsus, King of Lydia, dreamed that he saw his son slain by an iron weapon, and though by every means he strove to avert this doom from him, yet thus it happened, for his son was slain by the hand of the man who seemed least of all likely to do the deed.

Of Crœsus tells my tale, a king of old
In Lydia, ere the Mede fell on the land,
A man made mighty by great heaps of gold,
Feared for the myriads strong of heart and hand
That 'neath his banners wrought out his command,
And though his latter ending fell to ill,
Yet first of every joy he had his fill.

Two sons he had, and one was dumb from birth ;
The other one, that Atys had to name,
Grew up a fair youth, and of might and worth,
And well it seemed the race wherefrom he came
From him should never get reproach or shame :
But yet no stroke he struck before his death,
In no war-shout he spent his latest breath.

Now Crœsus, lying on his bed anight,
Dreamed that he saw his dear son lying low,
And folk lamenting he was slain outright,
And that some iron thing had dealt the blow ;
By whose hand guided he could nowise know,
Or if in peace by traitors it were done,
Or in some open war not yet begun.

Three times one night this vision broke his sleep,
So that at last he rose up from his bed,
That he might ponder how he best might keep
The threatened danger from so dear a head ;

And, since he now was old enough to wed,
The King sent men to search the lands around,
Until some matchless maiden should be found;

That in her arms this Atys might forget
The praise of men, and fame of history,
Whereby full many a field has been made wet
With blood of men, and many a deep green sea
Been reddened therewithal, and yet shall be;
That her sweet voice might drown the people's praise,
Her eyes make bright the uneventful days.

So when at last a wonder they had brought,
From some sweet land down by the ocean's rim,
Than whom no fairer could by man be thought,
And ancient dames, scanning her limb by limb,
Had said that she was fair enough for him,
To her was Atys married with much show,
And looked to dwell with her in bliss enow.

And in meantime afield he never went,
Either to hunting or the frontier war,
No dart was cast, nor any engine bent
Anigh him, and the Lydian men afar
Must rein their steeds, and the bright blossoms mar
If they have any lust of tourney now,
And in far medows must they bend the bow.

And also through the palace everywhere
The swords and spears were taken from the wall
That long with honour had been hanging there,
And from the golden pillars of the hall;
Lest by mischance some sacred blade should fall,
And in its falling bring revenge at last
For many a fatal battle overpast.

And every day King Crœsus wrought with care
To save his dear son from that threatened end,
And many a beast he offered up with prayer
Unto the Gods, and much of wealth did spend,
That they so prayed might yet perchance defend
That life, until at least that he were dead,
With earth laid heavy on his unseeing head.

But in the midst even of the wedding feast
There came a man, who by the golden hall
Sat down upon the steps, and man or beast
He heeded not, but there against the wall
He leaned his head, speaking no word at all,
Till, with his son and son's wife, came the King,
And then unto his gown the man did cling.

"What man art thou ?" the King said to him then,
"That in such guise thou prayest on thy knee ;
Hast thou some fell foe here among my men ?
Or hast thou done an ill deed unto me ?
Or has thy wife been carried over sea ?
Or hast thou on this day great need of gold ?
Or say, why else thou now art grown so bold."

"O King," he said, "I ask no gold to-day,
And though indeed thy greatness drew me here,
No wrong have I that thou couldst wipe away ;
And naught of mine the pirate folk did bear
Across the sea ; none of thy folk I fear :
But all the gods are now mine enemies,
Therefore I kneel before thee on my knees.

"For as with mine own brother on a day
Within the running place at home I played,
Unwittingly I smote him in such way
That dead upon the green grass he was laid ;
Half-dead myself I fled away dismayed,
Wherefore I pray thee help me in my need,
And purify my soul of this sad deed.

"If of my name and country thou wouldst know,
In Phrygia yet my father is a king,
Gordius, the son of Midas, rich enow
In corn and cattle, golden cup and ring ;
And mine own name before I did this thing
Was called Adrastus, whom, in street and hall,
The slayer of his brother men now call."

"Friend," said the King, "have thou no fear of me ;
For though, indeed, I am right happy now,
Yet well I know this may not always be,

And I may chance some day to kneel full low,
And to some happy man mine head to bow
With prayers to do a greater thing than this,
Dwell thou with us, and win again thy bliss.

"For in this city men in sport and play
Forget the trouble that the gods have sent;
Who therewithal send wine, and many a may
As fair as she for whom the Trojan went,
And many a dear delight besides have lent,
Which, whoso is well loved of them shall keep
Till in forgetful death he falls asleep.

"Therefore to-morrow shall those rites be done
That kindred blood demands that thou hast shed,
That if the mouth of thine own Mother's son
Did hap to curse thee ere he was quite dead,
The curse may lie the lighter on thy head,
Because the flower-crowned head of many a beast
Has fallen voiceless in our glorious feast."

Then did Adrastus rise and thank the King,
And the next day when yet low was the sun,
The sacrifice and every other thing
That unto these dread rites belonged, was done;
And there Adrastus dwelt, hated of none,
And loved of many, and the King loved him,
For brave and wise he was and strong of limb.

But chiefly amongst all did Atys love
The luckless stranger, whose fair tales of war
The Lydian's heart abundantly did move,
And much they talked of wandering afar
Some day, to lands where many marvels are,
With still the Phrygian through all things to be
The leader unto all felicity.

Now at this time folk came unto the King
Who on a forest's borders dwelling were;
Wherein there roamed full many a dangerous thing,
As wolf and wild bull, lion and brown bear;
But chiefly in that forest was the lair
Of a great boar that no man could withstand,
And many a woe he wrought upon the land.

Since long ago that men in Calydon
Held chase, no beast like him had once been seen.
He ruined vineyards lying in the sun,
After his harvesting the men must glean
What he had left; right glad they had not been
Among the tall stalks of the ripening wheat,
The fell destroyer's fatal tusks to meet.

For often would the lonely man entrapped
In vain from his dire fury strive to hide
In some thick hedge, and other whiles it happed
Some careless stranger by his place would ride,
And the tusks smote his fallen horse's side,
And what help then to such a wretch could come
With sword he could not draw, and far from home?

Or else girls, sent their water-jars to fill,
Would come back pale, too terrified to cry,
Because they had but seen him from the hill;
Or else again with side rent wretchedly,
Some hapless damsel midst the brake would lie.
Shortly to say, there neither man nor maid
Was safe afield whether they wrought or played.

Therefore were come these dwellers by the wood
To pray the King brave men to them to send,
That they might live; and if he deemed it good,
That Atys with the other knights should wend,
They thought their grief the easier should have end;
For both by gods and men they knew him loved,
And easily by hope of glory moved.

"O Sire," they said, "thou know'st how Hercules
Was not content to wait till folk asked aid,
But sought the pests among their guarded trees;
Thou know'st what name the Theban Cadmus made,
And how the bull of Marathon was laid
Dead on the fallows of the Athenian land,
And how folk worshipped Atalanta's hand.

"Fair would thy son's name look upon the roll
Wherein such noble deeds as this are told;
And great delight shall surely fill thy soul,
Thinking upon his deeds when thou art old,

And thy brave heart is waxen faint and cold:
Dost thou not know, O King, how men will strive
That they, when dead, still in their sons may live?"

He shuddered as they spoke, because he thought,
Most certainly a winning tale is this
To draw him from the net where he is caught,
For hearts of men grow weary of all bliss;
Nor is he one to be content with his,
If he should hear the trumpet-blast of fame
And far-off people calling on his name.

"Good friends," he said, "go, get ye back again,
And doubt not I will send you men to slay
This pest ye fear: yet shall your prayer be vain
If ye with any other speak to-day;
And for my son, with me he needs must stay,
For mighty cares oppress the Lydian land
Fear not, for ye shall have a noble band."

And with that promise must they be content,
And so departed, having feasted well.
And yet some god or other ere they went,
If they were silent, this their tale must tell
To more than one man; therefore it befell,
That at the last Prince Atys knew the thing,
And came with angry eyes unto the King.

"Father," he said, "since when am I grown vile?
Since when am I grown helpless of my hands?
Or else what folk, with words enwrought with guile,
Thine ears have poisoned; that when far-off lands
My fame might fill, by thy most strange commands
I needs must stay within this slothful home,
Whereto would God that I had never come?

"What! wilt thou take mine honour quite away?
Wouldst thou, that, as with her I just have wed
I sit among thy folk at end of day,
She should be ever turning round her head
To watch some man for war apparelled,
Because he wears a sword that he may use,
Which grace to me thou ever wilt refuse?

"Or dost thou think, when thou hast run thy race
And thou art gone, and in thy stead I reign,
The people will do honour to my place,
Or that the lords leal men will still remain,
If yet my father's sword be sharp in vain?
If on the wall his armour still hang up,
While for a spear I hold a drinking-cup?"

"O son!" quoth Crœsus, "well I know the brave,
And worthy of high deeds of chivalry;
Therefore the more thy dear life would I save,
Which now is threatened by the gods on high;
Three times one night I dreamed I saw thee die,
Slain by some deadly iron-pointed thing,
While weeping lords stood round thee in a ring."

Then loud laughed Atys, and he said again,
"Father, and did this ugly dream tell thee
What day it was on which I should be slain?
As may the gods grant I may one day be,
And not from sickness die right wretchedly,
Groaning with pain, my lords about my bed,
Wishing to God that I were fairly dead;

"But slain in battle, as the Lydian Kings
Have died ere now, in some great victory,
While all about the Lydian shouting rings
Death to the beaten foemen as they fly.
What death but this, O father! should I die?
But if my life by iron shall be done,
What steel to-day shall glitter in the sun?

"Yea, father, if to thee it seemeth good
To keep me from the bright steel-bearing throng,
Let me be brave at least within the wood;
For surely, if thy dream be true, no wrong
Can hap to me from this beasts' tushes strong:
Unless perchance the beast is grown so wise,
He haunts the forest clad in Lydian guise."

Then Crœsus said: "O Son, I love thee so,
That thou shalt do thy will upon this tide:
But since unto this hunting thou must go,
A trusty friend along with thee shall ride,

Who not for anything shall leave thy side.
I think, indeed, he loves thee well enow
To thrust his heart 'twixt thee and any blow.

"Go then, O Son, and if by some short span
Thy life be measured, how shall it harm thee,
If while life last thou art a happy man?
And thou art happy; only unto me
Is trembling left, and infelicity:
The trembling of the man who loves on earth,
But unto thee is hope and present mirth.

"Nay, be thou not ashamed, for on this day
I fear not much: thou read'st my dream aright,
No teeth or claws shall take thy life away.
And it may chance, ere thy last glorious fight,
I shall be blinded by the endless night;
And brave Adrastus on this day shall be
Thy safeguard, and shall give good heart to me.

"Go then, and send him hither, and depart;
And as the heroes did mayst thou too do,
Winning such fame as well may please thine heart."
With that word from the King did Atys go,
Who, left behind, sighed, saying, "may it be so,
Even as I hope; and yet I would to God
These men upon my threshold ne'er had trod."

So when Adrastus to the King was come
He said unto him, "O my Phrygian friend,
We in this land have given you a fair home,
And 'gainst all foes your life will we defend:
Wherefore for us that life thou shouldest spend,
If any day there should be need therefore;
And now a trusty friend I need right sore.

"Doubtless ere now thou hast heard many say
There is a doom that threatens my son's life;
Therefore this place is stript of arms to-day,
And therefore still bides Atys with his wife,
And tempts not any god by raising strife;
Yet none the less by no desire of his,
To whom would war be most abundant bliss.

"And since to-day some glory he may gain
Against a monstrous bestial enemy
And that the meaning of my dream is plain;
That saith that he by steel alone shall die,
His burning wish I may not well deny,
Therefore afield to-morrow doth he wend
And herein mayst thou show thyself my friend—

"For thou as Captain of his band shalt ride,
And keep a watchful eye of everything,
Nor leave him whatsoever may betide:
Lo, thou art brave, the son of a great King,
And with thy praises doth this city ring,
Why should I tell thee what a name those gain,
Who dying for their friends, die not in vain?"

Then said Adrastus, "Now were I grown base
Beyond all words, if I should spare for aught
In guarding him, so sit with smiling face,
And of this matter take no further thought,
Because with my life shall his life be bought,
If ill should hap; and no ill fate it were,
If I should die for what I hold so dear."

Then went Adrastus, and next morn all things,
That 'longed unto the hunting were well dight,
And forth they went clad as the sons of Kings,
Fair was the morn, as through the sunshine bright
They rode, the Prince half wild with great delight,
The Phrygian smiling on him soberly,
And ever looking round with watchful eye.

So through the city all the rout rode fast,
With many a great black-muzzled yellow hound;
And then the teeming country-side they passed,
Until they came to sour and rugged ground,
And there rode up a little heathy mound,
That overlooked the scrubby woods and low,
That of the beast's lair somewhat they might know.

And there a good man of the country-side
Showed them the places where he mostly lay;
And they, descending, through the wood did ride.

And followed on his tracks for half the day.
And at the last they brought him well to bay,
Within an oozy space amidst the wood,
About the which a ring of alders stood.

So when the hounds' changed voices clear they heard,
With hearts aflame on towards him straight they drew
Atys the first of all, of nought afeard,
Except that folk should say some other slew
The beast; and lustily his horn he blew,
Going afoot; then, mighty spear in hand,
Adrastus headed all the following band.

Now when they came unto the plot of ground
Where stood the boar, hounds dead about him lay
Or sprawled about, bleeding from many a wound,
But still the others held him well at bay,
Nor had he been bestead thus ere that day.
But yet, seeing Atys, straight he rushed at him,
Speckled with foam, bleeding in flank and limb.

Then Atys stood and cast his well-steeled spear
With a great shout, and straight and well it flew;
For now the broad blade cutting through the ear,
A stream of blood from out the shoulder drew.
And therewithal another, no less true,
Adrastus cast, whereby the boar had died:
But Atys drew the bright sword from his side.

And to the tottering beast he drew anigh:
But as the sun's rays ran adown the blade
Adrastus threw a javelin hastily,
For of the mighty beast he was afraid,
Lest by his wounds he should not yet be stayed,
But with a last rush cast his life away,
And dying there, the son of Crœsus slay.

But even as the feathered dart he hurled,
His strained, despairing eyes, beheld the end,
And changed seemed all the fashion of the world,
And past and future into one did blend,
As he beheld the fixed eyes of his friend,
That no reproach had in them, and no fear,
For Death had seized him ere he thought him near.

Adrastus shrieked, and running up he caught
The falling man, and from his bleeding side
Drew out the dart, and seeing that death had brought
Deliverance to him, he thereby had died;
But ere his hand the luckless steel could guide,
And he the refuge of poor souls could win,
The horror-stricken huntsmen had rushed in.

And these, with blows and cries he heeded nought,
His unresisting hands made haste to bind;
Then of the alder-boughs a bier they wrought,
And laid the corpse thereon, and 'gan to wind
Homeward amidst the tangled wood and blind,
And going slowly, at the eventide,
Some leagues from Sardis did that day abide.

Onward next morn the slaughtered man they bore,
With him that slew him, and at end of day
They reached the city, and with mourning sore
Toward the King's palace did they take their way.
He in an open western chamber lay
Feasting, though inwardly his heart did burn
Until that Atys should to him return.

And when those wails first smote upon his ear
He set the wine-cup down, and to his feet
He rose, and bitter all-consuming fear
Swallowed his joy, and nigh he went to meet
That which was coming through the weeping street:
But in the end he thought it good to wait,
And stood there doubting all the ills of fate.

But when at last up to that royal place
Folk brought the thing he once had held so dear,
Still stood the King, staring with ghastly face
As they brought forth Adrastus and the bier,
But spoke at last, slowly without a tear,
"O Phrygian man, that I did purify,
Is it through thee that Atys came to die?"

"O King," Adrastus said, "take now my life,
With whatso torment seemeth good to thee,
As my word went, for I would end this strife,
And underneath the earth lie quietly;
Nor is it my will here alive to be:

For as my brother, so Prince Atys died,
And this unlucky hand some god did guide."

Then as a man constrained, the tale he told
From end to end, nor spared himself one whit:
And as he spoke, the wood did still behold,
The trodden grass, and Atys dead on it;
And many a change o'er the King's face did flit
Of kingly rage, and hatred and despair,
As on the slayer's face he still did stare.

At last he said, "Thy death avails me nought,
The gods themselves have done this bitter deed,
That I was all too happy was their thought,
Therefore thy heart is dead and mine doth bleed,
And I am helpless as a trodden weed:
Thou art but as the handle of the spear,
The caster sits far off from any fear.

"Yet, if thy hurt they meant, I can do this,—
Loose him and let him go in peace from me—
I will not slay the slayer of all my bliss;
Yet go, poor man, for when thy face I see
I curse the gods for their felicity.
Surely some other slayer they would have found,
If thou hadst long ago been under ground.

"Alas, Adrastus! in my inmost heart
I knew the gods would one day do this thing,
But deemed indeed that it would be thy part
To comfort me amidst my sorrowing;
Make haste to go, for I am still a King!
Madness may take me, I have many hands
Who will not spare to do my worst commands."

With that Adrastus' bonds were done away,
And forthwith to the city gates he ran,
And on the road where they had been that day
Rushed through the gathering night; and some lone man
Beheld next day his visage wild and wan,
Peering from out a thicket of the wood
Where he had spilt that well-beloved blood.

And now the day of burial pomp must be,
And to those rites all lords of Lydia came

About the King, and that day, they and he
Cast royal gifts of rich things on the flame;
But while they stood and wept, and called by name
Upon the dead, amidst them came a man
With raiment rent, and haggard face and wan:

Who when the marshals would have thrust him out
And men looked strange on him, began to say,
"Surely the world is changed since ye have doubt
Of who I am; nay, turn me not away,
For ye have called me princely ere to-day—
Adrastus, son of Gordius, a great King,
Where unto Pallas Phrygian maidens sing.

"O Lydians, many a rich thing have ye cast
Into this flame, but I myself will give
A greater gift, since now I see at last
The gods are wearied for that still I live,
And with their will, why should I longer strive?
Atys, O Atys, thus I give to thee
A life that lived for thy felicity."

And therewith from his side a knife he drew,
And, crying out, upon the pile he leapt,
And with one mighty stroke himself he slew.
So there these princes both together slept,
And their light ashes, gathered up, were kept
Within a golden vessel wrought all o'er
With histories of this hunting of the boar.

Paraphrase Lines 29 to 35, 175 to 182, 183 to 189, 365 to 371. Repetition 204 to 226.

THE LIFE OF NELSON.

CHAPTER I.

Nelson's Birth and Boyhood—He is entered on board the Raisonnable—Goes to the West Indies in a Merchantship; then serves in the Triumph—He sails in Captain Phipp's Voyage of Discovery—Goes to the East Indies in the Seahorse, and returns in ill-health—Serves as acting Lieutenant in the Worcester, and is made Lieutenant into the Lowestoffe, Commander into the Badger Brig, and Post into the Hinchenbrook—Expedition against the Spanish Main—Sent to the North Seas in the Albemarle—Services during the American War.

Horatio, son of Edmund and Catherine Nelson, was born Sept. 29, 1758, in the parsonage house of Burnham Thorpe, a village in the county of Norfolk, of which his father was rector. The maiden name of his mother was Suckling: her grandmother was an elder sister of Sir Robert Walpole, and this child was named after his god-father, the first Lord Walpole. Mrs. Nelson died in 1767, leaving eight, out of eleven children. Her brother, Capt. Maurice Suckling, of the navy, visited the widower upon this event, and promised to take care of one of the boys. Three years afterwards, when Horatio was only twelve years of age, being at home during the Christmas holidays, he read in the county newspaper that his uncle was appointed to the Raisonnable, of sixty-four guns. "Do, William," said he to a brother who was a year and a half older than himself, "write to my father, and tell him that I should like to go to sea with uncle Maurice." Mr. Nelson was then at Bath, whither he had gone for the recovery of his health: his circumstances were straitened, and he had no prospect of ever seeing them bettered: he knew that it was the wish of providing for himself by which Horatio was chiefly actuated; and did not oppose his resolution; he understood also the boy's character, and had always said, that in whatever station he might be placed, he would climb if possible to the very top of the tree. Accordingly Capt. Suckling was written to. "What," said he in his answer, "has poor Horatio done, who is so weak, that he, above all the rest, should be sent to rough it out at sea?—But let him come; and the first time we go into action, a cannon-ball may knock off his head, and provide for him at once."

It is manifest from these words, that Horatio was not the boy whom his uncle would have chosen to bring up in his own profession. He was never of a strong body; and the ague, which at that time was one of the most common diseases in England, had greatly reduced his strength; yet he had already given proofs of that resolute heart and nobleness of mind which, during his whole career of labour and of glory, so eminently distinguished him. When a mere child, he strayed a birds'-nesting from his grandmother's house in company with a cow-boy; the dinner-hour elapsed; he was absent, and could not be found; and the alarm of the family became very great, for they apprehended that he might have been carried off by gipsies. At length, after search had been made for him in various directions, he was discovered alone, sitting composedly by the side of a brook which he could not get over. "I wonder, child," said the old lady when she saw him, "that hunger and fear did not drive you home."—"Fear! grandmama," replied the future hero, "I never saw fear:—What is it?" Once, after the winter holidays, when he and his brother William had set off on horseback to return to school, they came back, because there had been a fall of snow; and William, who did not much like the journey, said it was too deep for them to venture on. "If that be the case," said the father, "you certainly shall not go; but make another attempt, and I will leave it to your honour. If the road is dangerous, you may return: but remember, boys, I leave it to your honour!" The snow was deep enough to have afforded them a reasonable excuse; but Horatio was not to be prevailed upon to turn back. "We must go on," said he: "remember, brother, it was left to our honour!"—There were some fine pears growing in the schoolmaster's garden, which the boys regarded as lawful booty, and in the highest degree tempting; but the boldest among them were afraid to venture for the prize. Horatio volunteered upon this service: he was lowered down at night from the bedroom window by some sheets, plundered the tree, was drawn up with the pears, and then distributed them among his schoolfellows without reserving any for himself.—"He only took them," he said, "because every other boy was afraid."

Early on a cold and dark spring morning Mr. Nelson's servant arrived at this school, at North Walsham, with the

expected summons for Horatio to join his ship. The parting from his brother William, who had been for so many years his play-mate and bed-fellow, was a painful effort, and was the beginning of those privations which are the sailor's lot through life. He accompanied his father to London. The Raisonnable was lying in the Medway. He was put into the Chatham stage, and on its arrival was set down with the rest of the passengers, and left to find his way on board as he could. After wandering about in the cold, without being able to reach the ship, an officer observed the forlorn appearance of the boy, questioned him; and, happening to be acquainted with his uncle, took him home and gave him some refreshments. When he got on board, Captain Suckling was not in the ship, nor had any person been apprised of the boy's coming. He paced the deck the whole remainder of the day without being noticed by any one; and it was not till the second day that somebody, as he expressed it, "took compassion on him." The pain which is felt when we are first transplanted from our native soil—when the living branch is cut from the parent tree—is one of the most poignant which we have to endure through life. There are after-griefs which wound more deeply, which leave behind them scars never to be effaced, which bruise the spirit, and sometimes break the heart; but never do we feel so keenly the want of love, the necessity of being loved, and the sense of utter desertion, as when we first leave the haven of home, and are, as it were, pushed off upon the stream of life. Added to these feelings, the sea-boy has to endure physical hardships, and the privation of every comfort, even of sleep. Nelson had a feeble body and an affectionate heart, and he remembered through life his first days of wretchedness in the service.

The Raisonnable having been commissioned on account of the dispute respecting the Falkland Islands, was paid off as soon as the difference with the court of Spain was accommodated, and Captain Suckling was removed to the Triumph, seventy-four, then stationed as a guard-ship in the Thames. This was considered as too inactive a life for a boy, and Nelson was therefore sent a voyage to the West Indies in a merchant-ship, commanded by Mr. John Rathbone, an excellent seaman who had served as master's mate under Captain Suckling in the Dreadnought. He returned a

practical seaman, but with a hatred of the king's service, and a saying then common among the sailors—"aft the most honour; forward the better man." Rathbone had probably been disappointed and disgusted in the navy; and, with no unfriendly intentions, warned Nelson against a profession which he himself had found hopeless. His uncle received him on board the Triumph on his return, and discovering his dislike to the navy, took the best means of reconciling him to it. He held it out as a reward that, if he attended well to his navigation, he should go in the cutter and decked long-boat, which was attached to the commanding-officer's ship at Chatham. Thus he became a good pilot for vessels of that description, from Chatham to the Tower and down the Swin Channel to the North Foreland, and acquired a confidence among rocks and sands, of which he often felt the value.

Nelson had not been many months on board the Triumph, when his love of enterprise was excited by hearing that two ships were fitting out for a voyage of discovery toward the North Pole. In consequence of the difficulties which were expected on such a service, these vessels were to take out effective men instead of the usual number of boys. This, however, did not deter him from soliciting to be received, and, by his uncle's interest, he was admitted as coxswain under Capt. Lutwidge, second in command. The voyage was undertaken in compliance with an application from the Royal Society. The Hon. Captain Constantine John Phipps, eldest son of Lord Mulgrave, volunteered his services. The Racehorse and Carcass bombs were selected as the strongest ships, and, therefore, best adapted for such a voyage; and they were taken into dock and strengthened, to render them as secure as possible against the ice. Two masters of Greenlandmen were employed as pilots for each ship. No expedition was ever more carefully fitted out; and the first Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Sandwich, with a laudable solicitude, went on board himself, before their departure, to see that every thing had been completed to the wish of the officers. The ships were provided with a simple and excellent apparatus for distilling fresh from salt water, the invention of Dr. Irving, who accompanied the expedition. It consisted merely in fitting a tube to the ship's kettle, and applying a wet mop to the surface as the

vapour was passing. By these means, from thirty-four to forty gallons were produced every day.

They sailed from the Nore on the 4th of June. On the 6th of the following month they were in lat. 79° 56′ 39″; long. 9° 43′ 30″ E. The next day, about the place where most of the old discoverers had been stopped, the Racehorse was beset with ice; but they hove her through with ice anchors. Captain Phipps continued ranging along the ice, northward and westward, till the 24th; he then tried to the eastward. On the 30th he was in lat. 80° 13′; long. 18° 48′ E. among the islands and in the ice, with no appearance of an opening for the ships. The weather was exceedingly fine, mild, and unusually clear. Here they were becalmed in a large bay, with three apparent openings between the islands which formed it; but everywhere, as far as they could see, surrounded with ice. There was not a breath of air, the water was perfectly smooth, the ice covered with snow, low and even, except a few broken pieces, near the edge; and the pools of water in the middle of the ice-fields just crusted over with young ice. On the next day the ice closed upon them, and no opening was to be seen anywhere, except a hole, or lake as it might be called, of about a mile and a-half in circumference, where the ships lay fast to the ice with their ice anchors. From these ice-fields they filled their casks with water, which was very pure and soft. The men were playing on the ice all day; but the Greenland pilots, who were further than they had ever been before, and considered that the season was far advancing, were alarmed at being thus beset.

The next day there was not the smallest opening, the ships were within less than two lengths of each other, separated by ice, and neither having room to turn. The ice, which the day before had been flat, and almost level with the water's edge, was now in many places forced higher than the mainyard, by the pieces squeezing together. A day of thick fog followed: it was succeeded by clear weather; but the passage by which the ships had entered from the westward was closed, and no open water was in sight, either in that or any other quarter. By the pilots' advice the men were set to cut a passage and warp through the small openings to the westward. They sawed through

pieces of ice twelve feet thick; and this labour continued the whole day, during which their utmost efforts did not move the ships above three hundred yards; while they were driven, together with the ice, far to the N. E. and E. by the current. Sometimes a field of several acres square would be lifted up between two larger islands, and incorporated with them; and thus these larger pieces continued to grow by aggregation. Another day passed, and there seemed no probability of getting the ships out, without a strong E. or N. E. wind. The season was far advanced, and every hour lessened the chance of extricating themselves. Young as he was, Nelson was appointed to command one of the boats which were sent out to explore a passage into the open water. It was the means of saving a boat belonging to the Racehorse from a singular but imminent danger. Some of the officers had fired at and wounded a walrus. As no other animal has so human-like an expression in its countenance, so also is there none that seems to possess more of the passions of humanity. The wounded animal dived immediately, and brought up a number of its companions; and they all joined in an attack upon the boat. They wrested an oar from one of the men; and it was with the utmost difficulty that the crew could prevent them from staving or upsetting her, till the Carcass's boat came up; and the walruses, finding their enemies thus reinforced, dispersed. Young Nelson exposed himself in a more daring manner. One night, during the mid-watch, he stole from the ship with one of his comrades, taking advantage of a rising fog, and set off over the ice in pursuit of a bear. It was not long before they were missed. The fog thickened, and Capt. Lutwidge and his officers became exceedingly alarmed for their safety. Between three and four in the morning the weather cleared, and the two adventurers were seen, at a considerable distance from the ship, attacking a huge bear. The signal for them to return was immediately made; Nelson's comrade called upon him to obey it, but in vain; his musket had flashed in the pan; their ammunition was expended; and a chasm in the ice, which divided him from the bear, probably preserved his life. "Never mind," he cried; "do but let me get a blow at this devil with the but-end of my musket, and we shall have him." Capt. Lutwidge, however, seeing his danger, fired a gun, which

had the desired effect of frightening the beast; and the boy then returned, somewhat afraid of the consequences of his trespass. The captain reprimanded him sternly for conduct so unworthy of the office which he filled, and desired to know what motive he could have for hunting a bear. "Sir," said he, pouting his lip, as he was wont to do when agitated, "I wished to kill the bear, that I might carry the skin to my father."

A party were now sent to an island, about twelve miles off (named Walden's Island in the charts, from the midshipman who was intrusted with this service), to see where the open water lay. They came back with information, that the ice, though close all about them, was open to the westward, round the point by which they came in. They said also, that upon the island they had had a fresh east wind. This intelligence considerably abated the hopes of the crew; for where they lay it had been almost calm, and their main dependence had been upon the effect of an easterly wind in clearing the bay. There was but one alternative—either to wait the event of the weather upon the ships, or to betake themselves to the boats. The likelihood that it might be necessary to sacrifice the ships had been foreseen. The boats, accordingly, were adapted, both in number and size, to transport, in case of emergency, the whole crew; and there were Dutch whalers upon the coast, in which they could all be conveyed to Europe. As for wintering where they were, that dreadful experiment had been already tried too often. No time was to be lost; the ships had driven into shoal water, having but fourteen fathoms. Should they, or the ice to which they were fast, take the ground, they must inevitably be lost; and at this time they were driving fast toward some rocks on the N. E. Capt. Phipps sent for the officers of both ships, and told them his intention of preparing the boats for going away. They were immediately hoisted out, and the fitting begun. Canvas bread-bags were made, in case it should be necessary suddenly to desert the vessels; and men were sent with the lead and line to the northward and eastward, to sound wherever they found cracks in the ice, that they might have notice before the ice took the ground; for, in that case, the ships must instantly have been crushed or overset.

On the 7th of August they began to haul the boats over the ice, Nelson having command of a four-oared cutter. The men behaved excellently well, like true British seamen: they seemed reconciled to the thought of leaving the ships, and had full confidence in their officers. About noon, the ice appeared rather more open near the vessels; and as the wind was easterly, though there was but little of it, the sails were set, and they got about a mile to the westward. They moved very slowly, and were not now nearly so far to the westward as when they were first beset. However, all sail was kept upon them, to force them through whenever the ice slacked the least. Whatever exertions were made, it could not be possible to get the boats to the water's edge before the 14th; and if the situation of the ships should not alter by that time, it would not be justifiable to stay longer by them. The commander therefore resolved to carry on both attempts together, moving the boats constantly, and taking every opportunity of getting the ships through. A party was sent out next day to the westward, to examine the state of the ice: they returned with tidings that it was very heavy and close, consisting chiefly of large fields. The ships, however, moved something, and the ice itself was drifting westward. There was a thick fog, so that it was impossible to ascertain what advantage had been gained. It continued on the 9th; but the ships were moved a little through some very small openings: the mist cleared off in the afternoon; and it was then perceived that they had driven much more than could have been expected to the westward, and that the ice itself had driven still farther. In the course of the day they got past the boats, and took them on board again. On the morrow the wind sprang up to the N.N.E. All sail was set, and the ships forced their way through a great deal of very heavy ice. They frequently struck, and with such force, that one stroke broke the shank of the Race-horse's best bower-anchor, but the vessels made way; and by noon they had cleared the ice, and were out at sea. The next day they anchored in Smeerenberg Harbour, close to that island of which the westernmost point is called Hakluyt's Headland, in honour of the great promoter and compiler of our English voyages of discovery.

Here they remained a few days, that the men might rest

after their fatigue. No insect was to be seen in this dreary country, nor any species of reptile—not even the common earth-worm. Large bodies of ice, called icebergs, filled up the valleys between high mountains, so dark as, when contrasted with the snow, to appear black. The colour of the ice was a lively light-green. Opposite to the place where they fixed their observatory, was one of these icebergs, above three hundred feet high; its side towards the sea was nearly perpendicular, and a stream of water issued from it. Large pieces frequently broke off and rolled down into the sea. There was no thunder nor lightning during the whole time they were in these latitudes. The sky was generally loaded with hard white clouds, from which it was never entirely free even in the clearest weather. They always knew when they were approaching the ice long before they saw it, by a bright appearance near the horizon, which the Greenlandmen called the blink of the ice. The season was now so far advanced that nothing more could have been attempted, if indeed anything had been left untried; but the summer had been unusually favourable, and they had carefully surveyed the wall of ice, extending for more than twenty degrees between the latitudes of 80° and 81°, without the smallest appearance of any opening.

The ships were paid off shortly after their return to England; and Nelson was then placed by his uncle with Capt. Farmer, in the Seahorse, of twenty guns, then going out to the East Indies in the squadron under Sir Edward Hughes. He was stationed in the foretop at watch and watch. His good conduct attracted the attention of the master (afterwards Captain Surridge) in whose watch he was; and, upon his recommendation, the captain rated him as midshipman. At this time his countenance was florid, and his appearance rather stout and athletic; but, when he had been about eighteen months in India, he felt the effects of that climate, so perilous to European constitutions. The disease baffled all power of medicine; he was reduced almost to a skeleton; the use of his limbs was for some time entirely lost; and the only hope that remained was from a voyage home. Accordingly he was brought home by Capt. Pigot, in the Dolphin; and had it not been for the attentive and careful kindness of that officer on the way, Nelson would never have lived to reach his native shores. He had formed an

acquaintance with Sir Charles Pole, Sir Thomas Troubridge, and other distinguished officers, then, like himself, beginning their career: he had left them pursuing that career in full enjoyment of health and hope, and was returning from a country, in which all things were to him new and interesting, with a body broken down by sickness, and spirits which had sunk with his strength. Long afterwards, when the name of Nelson was known as widely as that of England itself, he spoke of the feelings which he at this time endured. "I felt impressed," said he, "with a feeling that I should never rise in my profession. My mind was staggered with a view of the difficulties I had to surmount and the little interest I possessed. I could discover no means of reaching the object of my ambition. After a long and gloomy reverie, in which I almost wished myself overboard, a sudden glow of patriotism was kindled within me, and presented my king and country as my patron. 'Well then,' I exclaimed, 'I will be a hero! and, confiding in Providence, I will brave every danger!'"

Long afterwards Nelson loved to speak of the feelings of that moment; and from that time, he often said, a radiant orb was suspended in his mind's eye, which urged him onward to renown. The state of mind in which these feelings began, is what the mystics mean by their season of darkness and desertion. If the animal spirits fail, they represent it as an actual temptation. The enthusiasm of Nelson's nature had taken a different direction, but its essence was the same. He knew to what the previous state of dejection was to be attributed; that an enfeebled body, and a mind depressed, had cast this shade over his soul; but he always seemed willing to believe, that the sunshine which succeeded bore with it a prophetic glory, and that the light which led him on, was "light from heaven."

His interest, however, was far better than he imagined. During his absence, Capt. Suckling had been made comptroller of the navy; his health had materially improved upon the voyage; and, as soon as the Dolphin was paid off, he was appointed acting lieutenant in the Worcester, sixty-four, Capt. Mark Robinson, then going out with convoy to Gibraltar. Soon after his return, on the 8th of April, 1777, he passed his examination for a lieutenancy. Capt. Suckling

sat at the head of the board; and, when the examination had ended, in a manner highly honourable to Nelson, rose from his seat, and introduced him to the examining captains as his nephew. They expressed their wonder that he had not informed them of this relationship before; he replied that he did not wish the younker to be favoured; he knew his nephew would pass a good examination, and he had not been deceived. The next day Nelson received his commission as second lieutenant of the Lowestoffe frigate, Captain William Locker, then fitting out for Jamaica.

American and French privateers, under American colours, were at that time harassing our trade in the West Indies: even a frigate was not sufficiently active for Nelson, and he repeatedly got appointed to the command of one of the Lowestoffe's tenders. During one of their cruises the Lowestoffe captured an American letter-of-marque: it was blowing a gale, and a heavy sea running. The first lieutenant being ordered to board the prize, went below to put on his hanger. It happened to be mislaid; and, while he was seeking it, Captain Locker came on deck. Perceiving the boat still alongside, and in danger every moment of being swamped, and being extremely anxious that the privateer should be instantly taken in charge, because he feared that it would otherwise founder, he exclaimed, "Have I no officer in the ship who can board the prize?" Nelson did not offer himself immediately, waiting, with his usual sense of propriety, for the first lieutenant's return; but, hearing the master volunteer, he jumped into the boat, saying, "It is my turn now; and if I come back, it is yours." The American, who had carried a heavy press of sail in hope of escaping, was so completely water-logged that the Lowestoffe's boat went in on deck, and out again with the sea.

About this time he lost his uncle. Capt. Locker, however, who had perceived the excellent qualities of Nelson, and formed a friendship for him which continued during his life, recommended him warmly to Sir Peter Parker, then commander-in-chief upon that station. In consequence of this recommendation he was removed into the Bristol flag-ship, and Lieutenant Cuthbert Collingwood, who had long been in habits of great friendship with him, succeeded him in the Lowestoffe. Sir Peter Parker was the friend of both, and

thus it happened that whenever Nelson got a step in rank, Collingwood succeeded him. The former soon became first lieutenant; and, on the 8th of December, 1778, was appointed commander of the Badger brig; Collingwood taking his place in the Bristol. While the Badger was lying in Montego Bay, Jamaica, the Glasgow of twenty guns came in and anchored there, and in two hours was in flames, the steward having set fire to her while stealing rum out of the after-hold. Her crew were leaping into the water, when Nelson came up in his boats, made them throw their powder over board, and point their guns upward; and, by his presence of mind and personal exertions, prevented the loss of life which would otherwise have ensued. On the 11th of June, 1779, he was made post into the Hinchinbrook, of twenty-eight guns, an enemy's merchantman, sheathed with wood, which had been taken into the service. Collingwood was then made commander into the Badger. A short time after he left the Lowestoffe, that ship, with a small squadron, stormed the fort of St. Fernando de Omoa, on the south side of the Bay of Honduras, and captured some register ships which were lying under its guns. Two hundred and fifty quintals of quicksilver, and three millions of piastres, were the reward of this enterprise; and it is characteristic of Nelson, that the chance by which he missed a share in such a prize, is never mentioned in any of his letters; nor is it likely that it ever excited even a momentary feeling of vexation.

Nelson was fortunate in possessing good interest at the time when it could be most serviceable to him: his promotion had been almost as rapid as it could be; and before he had attained the age of twenty-one he had gained that rank which brought all the honours of the service within his reach. No opportunity, indeed, had yet been given him of distinguishing himself; but he was thoroughly master of his profession, and his zeal and ability were acknowledged wherever he was known. Count d'Estaing, with a fleet of one hundred and twenty-five sail, men of war and transports, and a reputed force of five-and-twenty thousand men, threatened Jamaica from St. Domingo. Nelson offered his services to the Admiral and to Governor-General Dalling, and was appointed to command the batteries of Fort Charles, at Port Royal. Not more than seven thousand men could be mus-

tered for the defence of the island,—a number wholly inadequate to resist the force which threatened them. Of this Nelson was so well aware, that when he wrote to his friends in England, he told them they must not be surprised to hear of his learning to speak French. D'Estaing, however, was either not aware of his own superiority, or not equal to the command with which he was intrusted: he attempted nothing with his formidable armament; and General Dalling was thus left to execute a project which he had formed against the Spanish colonies.

This project was, to take Fort San Juan on the river of that name, which flows from lake Nicaragua into the Atlantic; make himself master of the lake itself, and of the cities of Granada and Leon; and thus cut off the communication of the Spaniards between their northern and southern possessions in America. Here it is that a canal between the two seas may most easily be formed;—a work more important in its consequences than any which has ever yet been effected by human power. Lord George Germaine, at that time secretary of state for the American department, approved the plan; and as discontents at that time were known to prevail in the Nuevo Reyno, in Popayan, and in Peru, the more sanguine part of the English began to dream of acquiring an empire in one part of America, more extensive than that which they were on the point of losing in another. General Dalling's plans were well formed; but the history and the nature of the country had not been studied as accurately as its geography: the difficulties which occurred in fitting out the expedition delayed it till the season was too far advanced; and the men were thus sent to adventure themselves, not so much against an enemy, whom they would have beaten, as against a climate, which would do the enemy's work.

Early in the year 1780, five hundred men destined for this service, were convoyed by Nelson from Port Royal to Cape Gracias á Dios, in Honduras. Not a native was to be seen when they landed: they had been taught that the English came with no other intent than that of enslaving them, and sending them to Jamaica. After a while, however, one of them ventured down, confiding in his knowledge of one of the party; and by his means the neighbouring tribes were

conciliated with presents, and brought in. The troops were encamped on a swampy and unwholesome plain, where they were joined by a party of the seventy-ninth regiment, from Black River, who were already in a deplorable state of sickness. Having remained here a month they proceeded, anchoring frequently, along the Mosquito shore, to collect their Indian allies, who were to furnish proper boats for the river, and to accompany them. They reached the river San Juan, March 24th, and here, according to his orders, Nelson's services were to terminate; but not a man in the expedition had ever been up the river, or knew the distance of any fortification from its mouth; and he, not being one who would turn back when so much was to be done, resolved to carry the soldiers up. About two hundred, therefore, were embarked in the Mosquito shore craft, and in two of the Hinchinbrook's boats, and they began their voyage. It was the latter end of the dry season, the worst time for such an expedition; the river was consequently low; Indians were sent forward through narrow channels between shoals and sand banks, and the men were frequently obliged to quit the boats, and exert their utmost strength to drag or thrust them along. This labour continued for several days: when they came into deeper water, they had then currents and rapids to contend with, which would have been insurmountable but for the skill of the Indians in such difficulties. The brunt of the labour was borne by them and by the sailors—men never accustomed to stand aloof when any exertion of strength or hardihood is required. The soldiers, less accustomed to rely upon themselves, were of little use. But all equally endured the violent heat of the sun, rendered more intense by being reflected from the white shoals, while the high woods, on both sides of the river, were frequently so close as to prevent any refreshing circulation of air; and during the night all were equally exposed to the heavy and unwholesome dews.

On the 9th of April they reached an island in the river, called San Bartolomeo, which the Spaniards had fortified, as an outpost, with a small semicircular battery, mounting nine or ten swivels, and manned with sixteen or eighteen men. It commanded the river in a rapid and difficult part of the navigation. Nelson, at the head of a few of his seamen, leaped upon the beach. The ground upon which he sprung

was so muddy that he had some difficulty in extricating himself, and lost his shoes: bare-footed, however, he advanced, and in his own phrase, *boarded the battery*. In this resolute attempt he was bravely supported by Despard, at that time a captain in the army, afterward unhappily known for his schemes of revolutionary treason. The castle of San Juan is situated about sixteen miles higher up: the stores and ammunition, however, were landed a few miles below the castle, and the men had to march through woods almost impassable. One of the men was bitten under the eye by a snake, which darted upon him from the bough of a tree. He was unable to proceed from the violence of the pain: and when, after a short while, some of his comrades were sent back to assist him, he was dead, and the body already putrid. Nelson himself narrowly escaped a similar fate. He had ordered his hammock to be slung under some trees, being excessively fatigued, and was sleeping when a monitory lizard passed across his face. The Indians happily observed the reptile; and, knowing what it indicated, awoke him. He started up, and found one of the deadliest serpents of the country coiled up at his feet. He suffered from poison of another kind; for, drinking at a spring in which some boughs of the manchineel had been thrown, the effects were so severe as, in the opinion of some of his friends, to inflict a lasting injury upon his constitution.

The castle of San Juan is thirty-two miles below the point where the river issues from the Lake of Nicaragua, and sixty-nine from its mouth. Boats reach the sea from thence in a day and a-half; but their navigation back, even when unladen, is the labour of nine days. The English appeared before it on the 11th, two days after they had taken San Bartolomeo. Nelson's advice was, that it should instantly be carried by assault; but Nelson was not the commander; and it was thought proper to observe all the formalities of a siege. Ten days were wasted before this could be commenced. It was a work more of fatigue than of danger; but fatigue was more to be dreaded than the enemy; the rains set in; and, could the garrison have held out a little longer, diseases would have rid them of their invaders. Even the Indians sunk under it, the victims of unusual exertion, and of their own excesses. The place surrendered on the 24th. But victory procured to the conquerors none of

that relief which had been expected; the castle was worse than a prison; and it contained nothing which could contribute to the recovery of the sick, or the preservation of those who were yet unaffected. The huts, which served for hospitals, were surrounded with filth, and with the putrefying hides of slaughtered cattle—almost sufficient of themselves to have engendered pestilence; and when, at last, orders were given to erect a convenient hospital, the contagion had become so general, that there were none who could work at it; for, besides the few who were able to perform garrison duty, there were not orderly men enough to assist the sick. Added to these evils, there was the want of all needful remedies; for, though the expedition had been amply provided with hospital stores, river craft enough had not been procured for transporting the requisite baggage; and, when much was to be left behind, provision for sickness was that which of all things men in health would be most ready to leave. Now, when these medicines were required, the river was swollen, and so turbulent that its upward navigation was almost impracticable. At length even the task of burying the dead was more than the living could perform, and the bodies were tossed into the stream, or left for beasts of prey, and for the gallinazos—those dreadful carrion birds, which do not always wait for death before they begin their work. Five months the English persisted in what may be called this war against nature. They then left a few men, who seemed proof against the climate, to retain the castle till the Spaniards should choose to retake it, and make them prisoners. The rest abandoned their baleful conquest. Eighteen hundred men were sent to different posts upon this wretched expedition: not more than three hundred and eighty ever returned. The Hinchinbrook's complement consisted of two hundred men; eighty-seven took to their beds in one night, and of the whole crew not more than ten survived.

The transports' men all died, and some of the ships, having none left to take care of them, sunk in the harbour; but transport ships were not wanted, for the troops which they had brought were no more; they had fallen, not by the hand of an enemy, but by the deadly influence of the climate.

Nelson himself was saved by a timely removal. In a few days after the commencement of the siege he was seized with

the prevailing dysentery; meantime Capt. Glover (son of the author of Leonidas) died, and Nelson was appointed to succeed him in the Janus, of forty-four guns; Collingwood being then made post into the Hinchinbrook. He returned to the harbour the day before San Juan surrendered, and immediately sailed for Jamaica in the sloop which brought the news of his appointment. He was, however, so greatly reduced by the disorder, that when they reached Port Royal he was carried ashore in his cot; and, finding himself, after a partial amendment, unable to retain the command of his new ship, he was compelled to ask leave to return to England, as the only means of recovery. Capt. (afterwards Admiral) Cornwallis took him home in the Lion; and to his care and kindness Nelson believed himself indebted for his life. He went immediately to Bath, in a miserable state; so helpless, that he was carried to and from his bed; and the act of moving him produced the most violent pain. In three months he recovered, and immediately hastened to London, and applied for employment. After an interval of about four months he was appointed to the Albemarle, of twenty-eight guns, a French merchantman, which had been purchased from the captors for the king's service.

His health was not yet thoroughly re-established; and, while he was employed in getting his ship ready, he again became so ill as hardly to be able to keep out of bed. Yet in this state, still suffering from the fatal effect of a West Indian climate, as if, it might almost be supposed he said, to try his constitution, he was sent to the North Seas, and kept there the whole winter. The asperity with which he mentioned this so many years afterwards, evinces how deeply he resented a mode of conduct equally cruel to the individual and detrimental to the service. It was during the armed neutrality; and when they anchored off Elsineur, the Danish Admiral sent on board, desiring to be informed what ships had arrived, and to have their force written down. "The Albemarle," said Nelson to the messenger, "is one of his Britannic Majesty's ships: you are at liberty, sir, to count the guns as you go down the side; and you may assure the Danish Admiral, that, if necessary, they shall all be well served." During this voyage he gained a considerable knowledge of the Danish coast, and its soundings; greatly to the advantage of his country in after times. The Albemarle was not a good ship,

and was several times nearly overset, in consequence of the masts having been made much too long for her. On her return to England they were shortened, and some other improvements made at Nelson's suggestion. Still he always insisted that her first owners, the French, had taught her to run away, as she was never a good sailer, except when going directly before the wind.

On their return to the Downs, while he was ashore visiting the senior officer, there came on so heavy a gale that almost all the vessels drove, and a store ship came athwart-hawse of the Albemarle. Nelson feared she would drive on the Goodwin Sands; he ran to the beach; but even the Deal boatmen thought it impossible to get on board, such was the violence of the storm. At length, some of the most intrepid offered to make the attempt for fifteen guineas; and to the astonishment and fear of all the beholders, he embarked during the height of the tempest. With great difficulty and imminent danger he succeeded in reaching her. She lost her bowsprit and foremast, but escaped further injury. He was now ordered to Quebec, where his surgeon told him he would certainly be laid up by the climate. Many of his friends urged him to represent this to Admiral Keppel; but having received his orders from Lord Sandwich, there appeared to him an indelicacy in applying to his successor to have them altered.

Accordingly he sailed for Canada. During her first cruise on that station, the Albemarle captured a fishing schooner, which contained, in her cargo, nearly all the property that her master possessed, and the poor fellow had a large family at home, anxiously expecting him. Nelson employed him as a pilot in Boston Bay, then restored him the schooner and cargo, and gave him a certificate to secure him against being captured by any other vessel. The man came off afterwards to the Albemarle, at the hazard of his life, with a present of sheep, poultry, and fresh provisions. A most valuable supply it proved; for the scurvy was raging on board: this was in the middle of August, and the ship's company had not had a fresh meal since the beginning of April. The certificate was preserved at Boston in memory of an act of unusual generosity; and now that the fame of Nelson has given interest to every thing connected with his

name, it is regarded as a relic. The Albemarle had a narrow escape upon this cruise. Four French sail of the line and a frigate, which had come out of Boston harbour, gave chase to her; and Nelson perceiving that they beat him in sailing, boldly ran among the numerous shoals of St. George's Bank, confiding in his own skill in pilotage. Capt. Salter, in the St. Margaretta, had escaped the French fleet, by a similar manœuvre, not long before. The frigate alone continued warily to pursue him; but, as soon as he perceived that this enemy was unsupported, he shortened sail and hove to; upon which the Frenchman thought it advisable to give over the pursuit, and sail in quest of his consorts.

At Quebec Nelson became acquainted with Alexander Davison; by whose interference he was prevented from making what would have been called an imprudent marriage. The Albemarle was about to leave the station, her captain had taken leave of his friends, and was gone down the river to the place of anchorage; when the next morning, as Davison was walking on the beach, to his surprise he saw Nelson coming back in his boat. Upon inquiring the cause of this reappearance, Nelson took his arm to walk towards the town, and told him he found it utterly impossible to leave Quebec without again seeing the woman whose society had contributed so much to his happiness there, and offering her his hand.—"If you do," said his friend, "your utter ruin must inevitably follow."—"Then let it follow," cried Nelson, "for I am resolved to do it."—"And I," replied Davison, "am resolved you shall not." Nelson, however, upon this occasion, was less resolute than his friend, and suffered himself to be led back to the boat.

The Albemarle was under orders to convoy a fleet of transports to New York.—"A very pretty job," said her captain, "at this late season of the year," (October was far advanced,) "for our sails are at this moment frozen to the yards." On his arrival at Sandy Hook, he waited on the commander-in-chief, Admiral Digby, who told him he was come on a fine station for making prize-money. "Yes, sir," Nelson made answer; "but the West Indies is the station for honour." Lord Hood, with a detachment of Rodney's victorious fleet was at that time at Sandy Hook: he had been intimate with Capt. Suckling; and Nelson, who was desirous of nothing

but honour, requested him to ask for the Albemarle, that he might go to that station where it was most likely to be obtained. Admiral Digby reluctantly parted with him. His professional merit was already well known; and Lord Hood, on introducing him to Prince William Henry, as the Duke of Clarence was then called, told the prince, if he wished to ask any questions respecting naval tactics, Captain Nelson could give him as much information as any officer in the fleet. The Duke who, to his own honour, became from that time the firm friend of Nelson, describes him as appearing the merest boy of a captain he had ever seen, dressed in a full-laced uniform, an old-fashioned waistcoat with long flaps, and his lank unpowdered hair tied in a stiff Hessian tail of extraordinary length; making altogether so remarkable a figure, that, says the Duke, "I had never seen anything like it before, nor could I imagine who he was, nor what he came about. But his address and conversation were irresistibly pleasing; and when he spoke on professional subjects, it was with an enthusiasm that showed he was no common being."

It was expected that the French would attempt some of the passages between the Bahamas; and Lord Hood, thinking of this, said to Nelson, "I suppose, sir, from the length of time you were cruising among the Bahama Keys, you must be a good pilot there." He replied, with that constant readiness to render justice to every man which was so conspicuous in all his conduct through life, that he was well acquainted with them himself, but that in that respect his second lieutenant was far his superior. The French got into Puerto Cabello on the coast of Venezuela. Nelson was cruising between that port and La Guayra, under French colours, for the purpose of obtaining information; when a king's launch, belonging to the Spaniards, passed near, and being hailed in French, came alongside without suspicion, and answered all questions that were asked concerning the number and force of the enemy's ships. The crew, however, were not a little surprised when they were taken on board, and found themselves prisoners. One of the party went by the name of the Count de Deux-Ponts. He was, however, a prince of the German empire, and brother to the heir of the Electorate of Bavaria: his companions were French officers of distinction, and men of science, who had been collecting specimens in the various branches of natural history.

Nelson having entertained them with the best his table could afford, told them they were at liberty to depart with their boat and all that it contained: he only required them to promise that they would consider themselves as prisoners, if the commander-in-chief should refuse to acquiesce in their being thus liberated: a circumstance which was not by any means likely to happen. Tidings soon arrived that the preliminaries of peace had been signed; and the Albemarle returned to England, and was paid off. Nelson's first business, after he got to London, even before he went to see his relations, was to attempt to get the wages due to his men for the various ships in which they had served during the war. "The disgust of seamen to the navy," he said, "was all owing to the infernal plan of turning them over from ship to ship; so that men could not be attached to the officers, nor the officers care the least about the men." Yet he himself was so beloved by his men, that his whole ship's company offered, if he could get a ship, to enter for her immediately. He was now, for the first time, presented at court. After going through this ceremony, he dined with his friend Davison at Lincoln's Inn. As soon as he entered the chambers, he threw off what he called his iron-bound coat; and, putting himself at ease in a dressing-gown, passed the remainder of the day in talking over all that had befallen them since they parted on the shore of the River St. Lawrence.

CHAPTER II.

Nelson goes to France during the Peace—Reappointed to the Boreas, and stationed at the Leeward Islands—His firm Conduct concerning the American Interlopers and the Contractors—Marries and returns to England—Is on the point of quitting the Service in disgust—Manner of life while unemployed—Appointed to the Agamemnon on the breaking out of the War of the French Revolution.

I have closed the war—said Nelson, in one of his letters—without a fortune; but there is not a speck in my character. True honour, I hope, predominates in my mind far above riches.

He did not apply for a ship, because he was not wealthy enough to live on board in the manner which was then become customary. Finding it, therefore, prudent to econo-

mize on his half-pay during the peace, he went to France, in company with Capt. Macnamara of the navy, and took lodgings at St. Omer's. The death of his favourite sister, Anne, who died in consequence of going out of the ball-room at Bath when heated with dancing, affected his father so much that it had nearly occasioned him to return in a few weeks. Time, however, and reason, and religion, overcame this grief in the old man; and Nelson continued at St. Omer's long enough to fall in love with the daughter of an English clergyman. This second attachment appears to have been less ardent than the first; for, upon weighing the evils of a straitened income to a married man, he thought it better to leave France, assigning to his friends something in his accounts as the cause. This prevented him from accepting an invitation from the Count of Deux-Ponts to visit him at Paris, couched in the handsomest terms of acknowledgment for the treatment which he had received on board the Albemarle.

The self-constraint which Nelson exerted in subduing this attachment made him naturally desire to be at sea; and when, upon visiting Lord Howe at the Admiralty, he was asked if he wished to be employed, he made answer that he did. Accordingly, in March, he was appointed to the Boreas, twenty-eight guns, going to the Leeward Islands, as a cruiser, on the peace establishment. Lady Hughes and her family went out with him to Admiral Sir Richard Hughes, who commanded on that station. His ship was full of young midshipmen, of whom there were not less than thirty on board; and happy were they whose lot it was to be placed with such a captain. If he perceived that a boy was afraid at first going aloft, he would say to him in a friendly manner, "Well, sir, I am going a race to the mast head, and beg that I may meet you there." The poor little fellow instantly began to climb, and got up how he could,—Nelson never noticed in what manner; but, when they met in the top, spoke cheerfully to him, and would say, how much any person was to be pitied who fancied that getting up was either dangerous or difficult. Every day he went into the school-room to see that they were pursuing their nautical studies; and at noon he was always the first on deck with his quadrant. Whenever he paid a visit of ceremony, some of these youths accompanied him; and when he went to dine with the

governor at Barbadoes, he took one of them in his hand, and presented him, saying, "Your Excellency must excuse me for bringing one of my midshipmen. I make it a rule to introduce them to all the good company I can, as they have few to look up to, besides myself, during the time they are at sea."

When Nelson arrived in the West Indies, he found himself senior captain, and consequently second in command on that station. Satisfactory as this was, it soon involved him in a dispute with the admiral, which a man less zealous for the service might have avoided. He found the Latona in English Harbour, Antigua, with a broad pendant hoisted; and, upon inquiring the reason, was presented with a written order from Sir R. Hughes, requiring and directing him to obey the orders of resident commissioner Moutray, during the time he might have occasion to remain there; the said resident commissioner being, in consequence, authorized to hoist a broad pendant on board any of his Majesty's ships in that port that he might think proper. Nelson was never at a loss how to act in any emergency. "I know of no superior officers," said he, "besides the lords commissioners of the Admiralty, and my seniors on the post list." Concluding, therefore, that it was not consistent with the service for a resident commissioner, who held only a civil situation, to hoist a broad pendant, the moment that he had anchored he sent an order to the captain of the Latona to strike it, and return it to the dock-yard. He went on shore the same day, dined with the commissioner, to show him that he was actuated by no other motive than a sense of duty, and gave him the first intelligence that his pendant had been struck. Sir Richard sent an account of this to the Admiralty; but the case could admit of no doubt, and Capt. Nelson's conduct was approved.

He displayed the same promptitude on another occasion. While the Boreas, after the hurricane months were over, was riding at anchor in Nevis Roads, a French frigate passed to leeward, close along shore. Nelson had obtained information that this ship was sent from Martinico, with two general officers and some engineers on board, to make a survey of our sugar islands. This purpose he was determined to prevent them from executing; and, therefore, he gave orders to follow them. The next day he came up with them at anchor

in the roads of St. Eustatia, and anchored at about two cables' length on the frigate's quarter. Being afterwards invited by the Dutch governor to meet the French officers at dinner, he seized that occasion of assuring the French captain that, understanding it was his intention to honour the British possessions with a visit, he had taken the earliest opportunity in his power to accompany him, in his Majesty's ship the Boreas, in order that such attention might be paid to the officers of his Most Christian Majesty, as every Englishman in the islands would be proud to show. The French, with equal courtesy, protested against giving him this trouble; especially, they said, as they intended merely to cruise round the islands without landing on any. But Nelson, with the utmost politeness, insisted upon paying them this compliment, followed them close, in spite of all their attempts to elude his vigilance, and never lost sight of them; till, finding it impossible either to deceive or escape him, they gave up their treacherous purpose in despair, and beat up for Martinico.

A business of more serious import soon engaged his attention. The Americans were at this time trading with our islands, taking advantage of the register of their ships, which had been issued while they were British subjects. Nelson knew that, by the Navigation Act, no foreigners, directly or indirectly, are permitted to carry on any trade with these possessions. He knew, also, that the Americans had made themselves foreigners with regard to England; they had disregarded the ties of blood and language, when they acquired the independence which they had been led on to claim, unhappily for themselves, before they were fit for it; and he was resolved that they should derive no profit from those ties now. Foreigners they had made themselves, and as foreigners they were to be treated. "If once," said he, "they are admitted to any kind of intercourse with our islands, the views of the loyalists, in settling at Nova Scotia, are entirely done away; and when we are again embroiled in a French war, the Americans will first become the carriers of these colonies, and then have possession of them. Here they come, sell their cargoes for ready money, go to Martinico, buy molasses, and so round and round. The loyalist cannot do this, and consequently must sell a little dearer. The residents here are Americans by connexion and by interest,

and are inimical to Great Britain. They are as great rebels as ever were in America, had they the power to show it." In November, when the squadron, having arrived at Barbadoes, was to separate, with no other orders than those for examining anchorages, and the usual inquiries concerning wood and water, Nelson asked his friend Collingwood, then captain of the Mediator, whose opinions he knew upon the subject, to accompany him to the commander-in-chief, whom he then respectfully asked, whether they were not to attend to the commerce of the country, and see that the Navigation Act was respected—that appearing to him to be the intent of keeping men-of-war upon this station in time of peace? Sir Richard Hughes replied, he had no particular orders, neither had the Admiralty sent him any Acts of Parliament. But Nelson made answer, that the Navigation Act was included in the statutes of the Admiralty, with which every captain was furnished, and that act was directed to admirals, captains, &c., to see it carried into execution. Sir Richard said, he had never seen the book. Upon this Nelson produced the statutes, read the words of the act, and apparently convinced the commander-in-chief, that men-of-war, as he said, "were sent abroad for some other purpose than to be made a show of." Accordingly orders were given to enforce the Navigation Act.

Major-General Sir Thomas Shirley was at this time governor of the Leeward Islands; and when Nelson waited on him, to inform him how he intended to act, and upon what grounds, he replied, that "old generals were not in the habit of taking advice from young gentlemen."—"Sir," said the young officer, with that confidence in himself which never carried him too far, and always was equal to the occasion, "I am as old as the prime minister of England, and think myself as capable of commanding one of his Majesty's ships as that minister is of governing the state." He was resolved to do his duty, whatever might be the opinion or conduct of others; and when he arrived upon his station at St. Kitt's, he sent away all the Americans, not choosing to seize them before they had been well apprised that the act would be carried into effect, lest it might seem as if a trap had been laid for them. The Americans, though they prudently decamped from St. Kitt's, were emboldened by the support they met with, and resolved to resist his orders, alleging

that king's ships had no legal power to seize them without having deputations from the customs. The planters were to a man against him; the governors and the presidents of the different islands, with only a single exception, gave him no support; and the admiral, afraid to act on either side, yet wishing to oblige the planters, sent him a note, advising him to be guided by the wishes of the president of the council. There was no danger in disregarding this, as it came unofficially, and in the form of advice. But scarcely a month after he had shown Sir Richard Hughes the law, and, as he supposed, satisfied him concerning it, he received an order from him, stating that he had now obtained good advice upon the point, and the Americans were not to be hindered from coming, and having free egress and regress, if the governor chose to permit them. An order to the same purport had been sent round to the different governors and presidents; and General Shirley and others informed him, in an authoritative manner, that they chose to admit American ships, as the commander-in-chief had left the decision to them. These persons, in his own words, he soon "trimmed up, and silenced;" but it was a more delicate business to deal with the admiral: "I must either," said he, "disobey my orders or disobey acts of parliament. I determined upon the former, trusting to the uprightness of my intentions, and believing that my country would not let me be ruined for protecting her commerce." With this determination he wrote to Sir Richard; appealed again to the plain, literal, unequivocal sense of the Navigation Act; and in respectful language told him, he felt it his duty to decline obeying these orders till he had an opportunity of seeing and conversing with him. Sir Richard's first feeling was that of anger, and he was about to supersede Nelson; but having mentioned the affair to his captain, that officer told him he believed all the squadron thought the orders illegal, and therefore did not know how far they were bound to obey them. It was impossible, therefore, to bring Nelson to a court-martial, composed of men who agreed with him in opinion upon the point in dispute; and luckily, though the admiral wanted vigour of mind to decide upon what was right, he was not obstinate in wrong, and had even generosity enough in his nature to thank Nelson afterwards for having shown him his error.

Collingwood, in the Mediator, and his brother, Wilfred Collingwood, in the Rattler, actively co-operated with Nelson. The custom-houses were informed, that after a certain day all foreign vessels found in the ports would be seized; and many were, in consequence, seized, and condemned in the admiralty court. When the Boreas arrived at Nevis, she found four American vessels deeply laden, and what are called the island colours flying—white, with a red cross. They were ordered to hoist their proper flag, and depart within eight-and-forty hours; but they refused to obey, denying that they were Americans. Some of their crews were then examined in Nelson's cabin, where the judge of admiralty happened to be present. The case was plain; they confessed that they were Americans, and that the ships, hull and cargo, were wholly American property; upon which he seized them. This raised a storm: the planters, the custom-house, and the governor, were all against him. Subscriptions were opened, and presently filled, for the purpose of carrying on the cause in behalf of the American captains; and the admiral, whose flag was at that time in the roads, stood neutral. But the Americans and their abettors were not content with defensive law. The marines, whom he had sent to secure the ships, had prevented some of the masters from going ashore; and those persons, by whose depositions it appeared that the vessels and cargoes were American property, declared that they had given their testimony under bodily fear, for that a man with a drawn sword in his hand had stood over them the whole time. A rascally lawyer, whom the party employed, suggested this story; and as the sentry at the cabin door was a man with a drawn sword, the Americans made no scruple of swearing to this ridiculous falsehood, and commencing prosecutions against him accordingly. They laid their damages at the enormous amount of £40,000; and Nelson was obliged to keep close on board his own ship, lest he should be arrested for a sum for which it would have been impossible to find bail. The marshal frequently came on board to arrest him, but was always prevented by the address of the first lieutenant, Mr. Wallis. Had he been taken, such was the temper of the people that it was certain he would have been cast for the whole sum. One of his officers, one day, in speaking of the restraint which he was thus compelled to suffer, happened to use the word

pity! "Pity!" exclaimed Nelson: "Pity! did you say? I shall live, sir, to be envied! and to that point I shall always direct my course." Eight weeks he remained in this state of duresse. During that time the trial respecting the detained ships came on in the Court of Admiralty. He went on shore under a protection for the day from the judge; but, notwithstanding this, the marshal was called upon to take that opportunity of arresting him, and the merchants promised to indemnify him for so doing. The judge, however, did his duty, and threatened to send the marshal to prison if he attempted to violate the protection of the court. Mr. Herbert, the president of Nevis, behaved with singular generosity upon this occasion. Though no man was a greater sufferer by the measures which Nelson had pursued, he offered in court to become his bail for £10,000, if he chose to suffer the arrest. The lawyer whom he had chosen proved to be an able as well as an honest man; and, notwithstanding the opinions and pleadings of most of the counsel of the different islands, who maintained that ships of war were not justified in seizing American vessels without a deputation from the customs, the law was so explicit, the case so clear, and Nelson pleaded his own cause so well, that the four ships were condemned. During the progress of this business, he sent a memorial home to the king; in consequence of which orders were issued that he should be defended at the expense of the crown. And upon the representation which he made at the same time to the secretary of state, and the suggestions with which he accompanied it, the register act was framed. The sanction of government, and the approbation of his conduct which it implied, were highly gratifying to him; but he was offended, and not without just cause, that the treasury should have transmitted thanks to the commander-in-chief for his activity and zeal in protecting the commerce of Great Britain. "Had they known all," said he, "I do not think they would have bestowed thanks in that quarter, and neglected me. I feel much hurt that, after the loss of health and risk of fortune, another should be thanked for what I did against his orders. I either deserved to be sent out of the service, or at least to have had some little notice taken of what I had done. They have thought it worthy of notice, and yet have neglected me. If this is the reward for a faithful discharge of my duty, I shall be careful, and never

stand forward again. But I have done my duty, and have nothing to accuse myself of."

The anxiety which he had suffered from the harassing uncertainties of law is apparent from these expressions. He had, however, something to console him, for he was at this time wooing the niece of his friend the president, then in her eighteenth year, the widow of Dr. Nisbet, a physician. She had one child, a son, by name Josiah, who was three years old. One day, Mr. Herbert, who had hastened half-dressed to receive Nelson, exclaimed, on returning to his dressing-room, "Good God! if I did not find that great little man, of whom everybody is so afraid, playing in the next room, under the dining-table, with Mrs. Nisbet's child!" A few days afterwards Mrs. Nisbet herself was first introduced to him, and thanked him for the partiality which he had shown to her little boy. Her manners were mild and winning; and the captain, whose heart was easily susceptible of attachment, found no such imperious necessity for subduing his inclinations as had twice before withheld him from marrying. They were married on March 11, 1787: Prince William Henry, who had come out to the West Indies the preceding winter, being present, by his own desire, to give away the bride. Mr. Herbert, her uncle, was at this time so much displeased with his only daughter that he had resolved to disinherit her, and leave his whole fortune, which was very great, to his niece. But Nelson, whose nature was too noble to let him profit by an act of injustice, interfered, and succeeded in reconciling the president to his child.

"Yesterday," said one of his naval friends the day after the wedding, "the navy lost one of its greatest ornaments by Nelson's marriage. It is a national loss that such an officer should marry: had it not been for this, Nelson would have become the greatest man in the service." The man was rightly estimated; but he who delivered this opinion did not understand the effect of domestic love and duty upon a mind of the true heroic stamp.

"We are often separate," said Nelson, in a letter to Mrs. Nisbet a few months before their marriage; "but our affections are not by any means on that account diminished. Our country has the first demand for our services; and

private convenience or happiness must ever give way to the public good. Duty is the great business of a sea officer: all private considerations must give way to it, however painful." "Have you not often heard," says he, in another letter, "that salt water and absence always wash away love? Now I am such a heretic as not to believe that article; for behold, every morning I have had six pails of salt water poured upon my head, and instead of finding what seamen say to be true, it goes on so contrary to the prescription, that you must, perhaps, see me before the fixed time." More frequently his correspondence breathed a deeper strain. "To write letters to you," says he, "is the next greatest pleasure I feel to receiving them from you. What I experience when I read such as I am sure are the pure sentiments of your heart, my poor pen cannot express; nor, indeed, would I give much for any pen or head which could express feelings of that kind. Absent from you, I feel no pleasure: it is you who are everything to me. Without you, I care not for this world; for I have found, lately, nothing in it but vexation and trouble. These are my present sentiments. God Almighty grant they may never change! Nor do I think they will. Indeed there is, as far as human knowledge can judge, a moral certainty that they cannot; for it must be real affection that brings us together; not interest or compulsion." Such were the feelings, and such the sense of duty with which Nelson became a husband.

During his stay upon this station, he had ample opportunity of observing the scandalous practices of the contractors, prize-agents, and other persons in the West Indies connected with the naval service. When he was first left with the command, and bills were brought him to sign for money which was owing for goods purchased for the navy, he required the original voucher, that he might examine whether those goods had been really purchased at the market price; but to produce vouchers would not have been convenient, and therefore was not the custom. Upon this Nelson wrote to Sir Charles Middleton, then comptroller of the navy, representing the abuses which were likely to be practised in this manner. The answer which he received seemed to imply that the old forms were thought sufficient; and thus, having no alternative, he was compelled, with his eyes open, to submit to a practice originating in fraudulent inten-

tions. Soon afterwards two Antigua merchants informed him, that they were privy to great frauds, which had been committed upon government in various departments; at Antigua, to the amount of nearly £500,000; at Lucie, £300,000; at Barbadoes, £250,000; at Jamaica, upwards of a million. The informers were both shrewd, sensible men of business; they did not affect to be actuated by a sense of justice, but required a per-centage upon so much as government should actually recover through their means. Nelson examined the books and papers which they produced, and was convinced that government had been most infamously plundered. Vouchers, he found, in that country, were no check whatever: the principle was, that "a thing was always worth what it would bring;" and the merchants were in the habit of signing vouchers for each other, without even the appearance of looking at the articles. These accounts he sent home to the different departments which had been defrauded; but the peculators were too powerful; and they succeeded not merely in impeding inquiry, but even in raising prejudices against Nelson at the board of admiralty, which it was many years before he could subdue.

Owing, probably, to these prejudices, and the influence of the peculators, he was treated, on his return to England, in a manner which had nearly driven him from the service. During the three years that the Boreas had remained upon a station which is usually so fatal, not a single officer or man of her whole complement had died. This almost unexampled instance of good health, though mostly, no doubt, imputable to a healthy season, must in some measure, also, be ascribed to the wise conduct of the captain. He never suffered the ships to remain more than three or four weeks at a time at any of the islands; and when the hurricane months confined him to English Harbour, he encouraged all kinds of useful amusements; music, dancing, and cudgelling among the men; theatricals among the officers; any thing which could employ their attention, and keep their spirits cheerful. The Boreas arrived in England in June. Nelson, who had many times been supposed to be consumptive when in the West Indies, and perhaps was saved from consumption by that climate, was still in a precarious state of health; and the raw wet weather of one of our ungenial summers brought on cold, and sore throat, and

fever; yet his vessel was kept at the Nore from the end of June till the end of November, serving as a slop and receiving ship. This unworthy treatment, which more probably proceeded from intention than from neglect, excited in Nelson the strongest indignation. During the whole five months he seldom or never quitted the ship, but carried on the duty with strict and sullen attention. On the morning when orders were received to prepare the Boreas for being paid off, he expressed his joy to the senior officer in the Medway, saying, "It will release me for ever from an ungrateful service, for it is my firm and unalterable determination never again to set my foot on board a king's ship. Immediately after my arrival in town I shall wait on the first lord of the admiralty; and resign my commission." The officer to whom he thus communicated his intentions behaved in the wisest and most friendly manner; for finding it in vain to dissuade him in his present state of feeling, he secretly interfered with the first lord to save him from a step so injurious to himself, little foreseeing how deeply the welfare and honour of England were at that moment at stake. This interference produced a letter from Lord Howe the day before the ship was paid off, intimating a wish to see Captain Nelson as soon as he arrived in town; when, being pleased with his conversation, and perfectly convinced, by what was then explained to him, of the propriety of his conduct, he desired that he might present him to the king on the first levee-day; and the gracious manner in which Nelson was then received, effectually removed his resentment.

Prejudices had been, in like manner, excited against his friend, Prince William Henry. "Nothing is wanting, sir," said Nelson, in one of his letters, "to make you the darling of the English nation, but truth. Sorry I am to say, much to the contrary has been dispersed." This was not flattery; for Nelson was no flatterer. The letter in which this passage occurs shows in how wise and noble a manner he dealt with the prince. One of his royal highness's officers had applied for a court-martial upon a point in which he was unquestionably wrong. His royal highness, however, while he supported his own character and authority, prevented the trial, which must have been injurious to a brave and deserving man. "Now that you are parted," said Nelson, "pardon me, my prince, when I presume to recommend that he may

stand in your royal favour as if he had never sailed with you, and that at some future day you will serve him. There only wants this to place your conduct in the highest point of view. None of us are without failings—his, was being rather too hasty; but that, put in competition with his being a good officer, will not, I am bold to say, be taken in the scale against him. More able friends than myself your royal highness may easily find, and of more consequence in the state; but one more attached and affectionate is not so easily met with. Princes seldom, very seldom, find a disinterested person to communicate their thoughts to: I do not pretend to be that person; but of this be assured, by a man who, I trust, never did a dishonourable act, that I am interested only that your royal highness should be the greatest and best man this country ever produced."

Encouraged by the conduct of Lord Howe, and by his reception at court, Nelson renewed his attack upon the peculators with fresh spirit. He had interviews with Mr. Rose, Mr. Pitt, and Sir Charles Middleton, to all of whom he satisfactorily proved his charges. In consequence, it is said, these very extensive public frauds were at length put in a proper train to be provided against in future: his representations were attended to; and every step which he recommended was adopted: the investigation was put into a proper course, which ended in the detection and punishment of some of the culprits; an immense saving was made to government, and thus its attention was directed to similar peculations in other parts of the colonies. But it is said also, that no mark of commendation seems to have been bestowed upon Nelson for his exertion. And it is justly remarked,* that the spirit of the navy cannot be preserved so effectually by the liberal honours bestowed on officers, when they are worn out in the service, as by an attention to those who, like Nelson at this part of his life, have only their integrity and zeal to bring them into notice. A junior officer, who had been left with the command at Jamaica, received an additional allowance, for which Nelson had applied in vain. Double pay was allowed to every artificer and seaman employed in the naval yard: Nelson had superintended the whole business of that yard with the most rigid exactness,

* Clarke and M'Arthur, vol. i, p. 107.

and he complained that he was neglected. "It was most true," he said, "that the trouble which he took to detect the fraudulent practices then carried on, was no more than his duty; but he little thought that the expenses attending his frequent journeys to St. John's upon that duty (a distance of twelve miles,) would have fallen upon his pay as captain of the Boreas." Nevertheless, the sense of what he thought unworthy usage did not diminish his zeal. "I," said he, "must still buffet the waves in search of —What? Alas! that they called honour is now thought of no more. My fortune, God knows, has grown worse for the service; so much for serving my country! But the devil, ever willing to tempt the virtuous, has made me offer, if any ships should be sent to destroy his majesty of Morocco's ports, to be there; and I have some reason to think that, should any more come of it, my humble services will be accepted. I have invariably laid down, and followed close, a plan of what ought to be uppermost in the breast of an officer,—that it is much better to serve an ungrateful country than to give up his own fame. Posterity will do him justice. A uniform course of honour and integrity seldom fails of bringing a man to the goal of fame at last."

The design against the Barbary pirates, like all other designs against them, was laid aside; and Nelson took his wife to his father's parsonage, meaning only to pay him a visit before they went to France; a project which he had formed for the sake of acquiring a competent knowledge of the French language. But his father could not bear to lose him thus unnecessarily. Mr. Nelson had long been an invalid, suffering under paralytic and asthmatic affections, which, for several hours after he rose in the morning, scarcely permitted him to speak. He had been given over by his physicians, for this complaint, nearly forty years before his death; and was, for many of his latter years, obliged to spend all his winters at Bath. The sight of his son, he declared, had given him new life. "But, Horatio," said he, "it would have been better that I had not been thus cheered, if I am so soon to be bereaved of you again. Let me, my good son, see you whilst I can. My age and infirmities increase, and I shall not last long." To such an appeal there could be no reply. Nelson took up his abode at the parsonage, and amused himself with the sports and occu-

pations of the country. Sometimes he busied himself with farming the glebe; sometimes spent the greater part of the day in the garden, where he would dig as if for the mere pleasure of wearying himself. Sometimes he went a birds'-nesting, like a boy; and in these expeditions Mrs. Nelson always, by his express desire, accompanied him. Coursing was his favourite amusement. Shooting, as he practised it, was far too dangerous for his companions; for he carried his gun upon the full cock, as if he were going to board an enemy; and the moment a bird rose, he let fly, without ever putting the fowling-piece to his shoulder. It is not, therefore, extraordinary, that his having once shot a partridge should be remembered by his family among the remarkable events of his life.

But his time did not pass away thus without some vexatious cares to ruffle it. The affair of the American ships was not yet over, and he was again pestered with threats of prosecution. "I have written them word," said he, "that I will have nothing to do with them, and they must act as they think proper. Government, I suppose, will do what is right, and not leave me in the lurch. We have heard enough lately of the consequences of the Navigation Act to this country. They may take my person; but if sixpence would save me from a prosecution, I would not give it." It was his great ambition at this time to possess a pony; and having resolved to purchase one, he went to a fair for that purpose. During his absence two men abruptly entered the parsonage, and inquired for him: they then asked for Mrs. Nelson; and after they had made her repeatedly declare that she was really and truly the captain's wife, presented her with a writ, or notification, on the part of the American captains, who now laid their damages at £20,000, and they charged her to give it to her husband on his return. Nelson having bought his pony, came home with it in high spirits. He called out his wife to admire the purchase, and listen to all its excellences: nor was it till his glee had in some measure subsided that the paper could be presented to him. His indignation was excessive; and in the apprehension that he should be exposed to the anxieties of the suit, and the ruinous consequences which might ensue, he exclaimed, "This affront I did not deserve! But I'll be trifled with no longer. I will write immediately to the treasury; and, if government

will not support me, I am resolved to leave the country." Accordingly, he informed the treasury that, if a satisfactory answer were not sent him by return of post, he should take refuge in France. To this he expected he should be driven, and for this he arranged every thing with his characteristic rapidity of decision. It was settled that he should depart immediately, and Mrs. Nelson follow under the care of his elder brother, Maurice, ten days after him. But the answer which he received from government quieted his fears: it stated, that Captain Nelson was a very good officer, and needed to be under no apprehension, for he would assuredly be supported.

Here his disquietude upon this subject seems to have ended. Still he was not at ease; he wanted employment, and was mortified that his applications for it produced no effect. "Not being a man of fortune," he said, "was a crime which he was unable to get over, and therefore none of the great cared about him." Repeatedly he requested the admiralty that they would not leave him to rust in indolence. During the armament which was made upon occasion of the dispute concerning Nootka Sound, he renewed his application; and his steady friend, Prince William, who had then been created Duke of Clarence, recommended him to Lord Chatham. The failure of this recommendation wounded him so keenly, that he again thought of retiring from the service in disgust: a resolution from which nothing but the urgent remonstrances of Lord Hood induced him to desist. Hearing that the Raisonnable, in which he had commenced his career, was to be commissioned, he asked for her. This also was in vain; and a coolness ensued, on his part, toward Lord Hood, because that excellent officer did not use his influence with Lord Chatham, upon this occasion. Lord Hood, however, had certainly sufficient reasons for not interfering; for he ever continued his steady friend. In the winter of 1792, when we were on the eve of the revolutionary war, Nelson once more offered his services, earnestly requested a ship, and added, that if their lordships should be pleased to appoint him to a cockle-boat, he should feel satisfied. He was answered in the usual official form: "Sir, I have received your letter of the 5th instant, expressing your readiness to serve, and have read the same to my lords commissioners of the admiralty." On the 12th of December

he received this dry acknowledgment. The fresh mortification did not, however, affect him long; for, by the joint interest of the Duke and Lord Hood, he was appointed, on the 30th of January following, to the Agamemnon, of sixty-four guns.

CHAPTER III.

The Agamemnon sent to the Mediterranean—Commencement of Nelson's acquaintance with Sir W. Hamilton—He is sent to Corsica, to co-operate with Paoli—State of affairs in that Island—Nelson undertakes the Siege of Bastia, and reduces it—Takes a distinguished part in the Siege of Calvi, where he loses an Eye—Admiral Hotham's action—The Agamemnon ordered to Genoa, to co-operate with the Austrian and Sardinian forces—Gross misconduct of the Austrian General.

There are three things, young gentleman—said Nelson to one of his midshipmen—which you are constantly to bear in mind. First, you must always implicitly obey orders, without attempting to form any opinion of your own respecting their propriety. Secondly, you must consider every man your enemy who speaks ill of your king; and, thirdly, you must hate a Frenchman as you do the devil.*

With these feelings he engaged in the war. Josiah, his son-in-law, went with him as a midshipman.

The Agamemnon was ordered to the Mediterranean, under Lord Hood. The fleet arrived in those seas at a time when the south of France would willingly have formed itself into a separate republic, under the protection of England. But good principles had been at that time perilously abused by ignorant and profligate men; and, in its fear and hatred of democracy, the English government abhorred whatever was republican. Lord Hood could not take advantage of the fair occasion which presented itself; and which, if it had been seized with vigour, might have ended in dividing France:—but he negotiated with the people of Toulon, to take possession provisionally of their port and city; which, fatally for themselves, was done. Before the British fleet entered, Nelson was sent with despatches to Sir William Hamilton,

* It should be remembered that this advice was given when the war between France and England was at its height—Happily a better feeling now prevails.

our envoy at the court of Naples. Sir William, after his first interview with him, told Lady Hamilton he was about to introduce a little man to her, who could not boast of being very handsome; but such a man as, he believed, would one day astonish the world. "I have never before," he continued, "entertained an officer at my house; but I am determined to bring him here. Let him be put in the room prepared for Prince Augustus." Thus that acquaintance began which ended in the destruction of Nelson's domestic happiness. It seemed to threaten no such consequences at its commencement. He spoke of Lady Hamilton, in a letter to his wife, as a young woman of amiable manners, who did honour to the station to which she had been raised; and he remarked, that she had been exceedingly kind to Josiah. The activity with which the envoy exerted himself in procuring troops from Naples, to assist in garrisoning Toulon, so delighted him, that he is said to have exclaimed, "Sir William, you are a man after my own heart!—you do business in my own way:" and then to have added, "I am now only a captain; but I will, if I live, be at the top of the tree." Here, also, that acquaintance with the Neapolitan court commenced, which led to the only blot upon Nelson's public character. The king, who was sincere at that time in his enmity to the French, called the English the saviours of Italy, and of his dominions in particular. He paid the most flattering attentions to Nelson, made him dine with him, and seated him at his right hand.

Having accomplished this mission, Nelson received orders to join Commodore Linzee, at Tunis. On the way, five sail of the enemy were discovered off the coast of Sardinia, and he chased them. They proved to be three forty-four gun frigates with a corvette of twenty-four and a brig of twelve. The Agamemnon had only three hundred and forty-five men at quarters, having landed part of her crew at Toulon, and others being absent in prizes. He came near enough one of the frigates to engage her, but at great disadvantage, the Frenchman manœuvring well, and sailing greatly better. A running fight of three hours ensued; during which the other ships, which were at some distance, made all speed to come up. By this time the enemy was almost silenced, when a favourable change of wind enabled her to get out of reach of the Agamemnon's guns; and that ship had

received so much damage in the rigging that she could not follow her. Nelson conceiving that this was but the forerunner of a far more serious engagement, called his officers together, and asked them if the ship was fit to go into action against such a superior force, without some small refit and refreshment for the men. Their answer was, that she certainly was not. He then gave these orders,—"Veer the ship, and lay her head to the westward: let some of the best men be employed in refitting the rigging, and the carpenter in getting crows and capstan-bars to prevent our wounded spars from coming down: and get the wine up for the people, with some bread, for it may be half an hour good before we are again in action." But when the French came up, their comrade made signals of distress, and they all hoisted out their boats to go to her assistance, leaving the Agamemnon unmolested.

Nelson found Commodore Linzee at Tunis, where he had been sent to expostulate with the dey upon the impolicy of his supporting the revolutionary government of France. Nelson represented to him the atrocity of that government. Such arguments were of little avail in Barbary; and when the dey was told that the French had put their sovereign to death, he drily replied, that "Nothing could be more heinous; and yet, if historians told the truth, the English had once done the same." This answer had doubtless been suggested by the French about him: they had completely gained the ascendancy, and all negotiation on our part proved fruitless. Shortly afterward, Nelson was detached with a small squadron, to co-operate with General Paoli and the Anti-Gallican party in Corsica.

Some thirty years before this time the heroic patriotism of the Corsicans, and of their leader, Paoli, had been the admiration of England. The history of these brave people is but a melancholy talk. The island which they inhabit has been abundantly blessed by nature; it has many excellent harbours; and though the *malaria*, or pestilential atmosphere, which is so deadly in many parts of Italy, and of the Italian islands, prevails on the eastern coast, the greater part of the country is mountainous and healthy. It is about one hundred and fifty miles long, and from forty to fifty broad; in circumference, some three hundred and twenty;

—a country large enough, and sufficiently distant from the nearest shores, to have subsisted as an independent state, if the welfare and happiness of the human race had ever been considered as the end and aim of policy. The Moors, the Pisans, the kings of Arragon, and the Genoese, successively attempted, and each for a time effected its conquest. The yoke of the Genoese continued longest, and was the heaviest. These petty tyrants ruled with an iron rod; and when at any time a patriot rose to resist their oppressions, if they failed to subdue him by force, they resorted to assassination. At the commencement of the last century they quelled one revolt by the aid of German auxiliaries, whom the Emperor Charles VI. sent against a people who had never offended him, and who were fighting for whatever is most dear to man. In 1734 the war was renewed; and Theodore, a Westphalian baron, then appeared upon the stage. In that age men were not accustomed to see adventurers play for kingdoms, and Theodore became the common talk of Europe. He had served in the French armies; and having afterwards been noticed both by Ripperda and Alberoni, their example, perhaps, inflamed a spirit as ambitious and as unprincipled as their own. He employed the whole of his means in raising money and procuring arms; then wrote to the leaders of the Corsican patriots, to offer them considerable assistance, if they would erect Corsica into an independent kingdom, and elect him king. When he landed among them, they were struck with his stately person, his dignified manners, and imposing talents. They believed the magnificent promises of foreign assistance which he held out, and elected him king accordingly. Had his means been as he represented them, they could not have acted more wisely than in thus at once fixing the government of their country, and putting an end to those rivalries among the leading families, which had so often proved pernicious to the public weal. He struck money, conferred titles, blocked up the fortified towns which were held by the Genoese, and amused the people with promises of assistance for about eight months: then, perceiving that they cooled in their affections towards him in proportion as their expectations were disappointed, he left the island, under the plea of expediting himself the succours which he had so long awaited. Such was his address, that he prevailed

upon several rich merchants in Holland, particularly the Jews, to trust him with cannon and warlike stores to a great amount. They shipped these under the charge of a supercargo. Theodore returned with this supercargo to Corsica, and put him to death on his arrival, as the shortest way of settling the account. The remainder of his life was a series of deserved afflictions. He threw in the stores which he had thus fraudulently obtained; but he did not dare to land, for Genoa had now called in the French to their assistance, and a price had been set upon his head. His dreams of royalty were now at an end; he took refuge in London, contracted debts, and was thrown into the King's Bench. After lingering there many years, he was released under an act of insolvency, in consequence of which he made over the kingdom of Corsica for the use of his creditors, and died shortly after his deliverance.

The French, who have never acted a generous part in the history of the world, readily entered into the views of the Genoese, which accorded with their own policy: for such was their ascendancy at Genoa, that in subduing Corsica for these allies, they were in fact subduing it for themselves. They entered into the contest, therefore, with their usual vigour, and their usual cruelty. It was in vain that the Corsicans addressed a most affecting memorial to the court of Versailles; that remorseless government persisted in its flagitious project. They poured in troops; dressed a part of them like the people of the country, by which means they deceived and destroyed many of the patriots; cut down the standing corn, the vines, and the olives; set fire to the villages, and hung all the most able and active men who fell into their hands. A war of this kind may be carried on with success against a country so small and so thinly peopled as Corsica. Having reduced the island to perfect servitude, which they called peace, the French withdrew their forces. As soon as they were gone, men, women, and boys rose at once against their oppressors. The circumstances of the times were now favourable to them; and some British ships, acting as allies of Sardinia, bombarded Bastia and San Fiorenzo, and delivered them into the hands of the patriots. This service was long remembered with gratitude: the impression made upon our own countrymen was less favourable. They had witnessed the heart-burnings of rival chiefs, and the dissen-

sions among the patriots; and perceiving the state of barbarism to which continual oppression, and habits of lawless turbulence, had reduced the nation, did not recollect that the vices of the people were owing to their unhappy circumstances; but that the virtues which they displayed arose from their own nature. This feeling, perhaps, influenced the British court, when, in 1746, Corsica offered to put herself under the protection of Great Britain: an answer was returned, expressing satisfaction at such a communication, hoping that the Corsicans would preserve the same sentiments, but signifying also that the present was not the time for such a measure.

These brave islanders then formed a government for themselves, under two leaders, Gaffori and Matra, who had the title of protectors. The latter is represented as a partisan of Genoa, favouring the views of the oppressors of his country by the most treasonable means. Gaffori was a hero worthy of old times. His eloquence was long remembered with admiration. A band of assassins was once advancing against him; he heard of their approach, went out to meet them; and, with a serene dignity which overawed them, requested them to hear him. He then spake to them so forcibly of the distresses of their country, her intolerable wrongs, and the hopes and views of their brethren in arms, that the very men who had been hired to murder him, fell at his feet, implored his forgiveness, and joined his banner. While he was besieging the Genoese in Corte, a part of the garrison perceiving the nurse with his eldest son, then an infant in arms, straying at a little distance from the camp, suddenly sallied out and seized them. The use they made of their persons was in conformity to their usual execrable conduct. When Gaffori advanced to batter the walls, they held up the child directly over that part of the wall at which the guns were pointed. The Corsicans stopt: but Gaffori stood at their head, and ordered them to continue the fire. Providentially the child escaped, and lived to relate, with becoming feeling, a fact so honourable to his father. That father conducted the affairs of the island till 1753, when he was assassinated by some wretches, set on, it is believed, by Genoa; but certainly pensioned by that abominable government after the deed. He left the country in such a state that it was enabled to continue the

war two years after his death without a leader: the Corsicans then found one worthy of their cause in Pasquale de Paoli.

Paoli's father was one of the patriots who effected their escape from Corsica when the French reduced it to obedience. He retired to Naples, and brought up this his youngest son in the Neapolitan service. The Corsicans heard of young Paoli's abilities, and solicited him to come over to his native country, and take the command. He did not hesitate long; his father, who was too far advanced in years to take an active part himself, encouraged him to go; and when they separated, the old man fell on his neck, and kissed him, and gave him his blessing. "My son," said he, "perhaps I may never see you more; but in my mind I shall ever be present with you. Your design is great and noble; and I doubt not but God will bless you in it. I shall devote to your cause the little remainder of my life in offering up my prayers for your success." When Paoli assumed the command, he found all things in confusion: he formed a democratical government, of which he was chosen chief; restored the authority of the laws; established a university; and took such measures, both for repressing abuses and moulding the rising generation, that, if France had not interfered, upon its wicked and detestable principle of usurpation, Corsica might at this day have been as free, and flourishing, and happy a commonwealth as any of the Grecian states in the days of their prosperity. The Genoese were at this time driven out of their fortified towns, and must in a short time have been expelled. France was indebted some millions of livres to Genoa: it was not convenient to pay this money; so the French minister proposed to the Genoese, that she should discharge the debt by sending six battalions to serve in Corsica for four years. The indignation which this conduct excited in all generous hearts was forcibly expressed by Rousseau, who, with all his errors, was seldom deficient in feeling for the wrongs of humanity. "You Frenchmen," said he, writing to one of that people, "are a thoroughly servile nation, thoroughly sold to tyranny, thoroughly cruel and relentless in persecuting the unhappy. If you knew of a freeman at the other end of the world, I believe you would go thither for the mere pleasure of extirpating him."

[illegible] Rousseau born at Geneva 1712 [illegible]

The immediate object of the French happened to be purely mercenary: they wanted to clear off their debt to Genoa; and as the presence of their troops in the island effected this, they aimed at doing the people no farther mischief. Would that the conduct of England had been at this time free from reproach! but a proclamation was issued by the English government, after the peace of Paris, prohibiting any intercourse with the rebels of Corsica. Paoli said, he did not expect this from Great Britain. This great man was deservedly proud of his country:—"I defy Rome, Sparta, or Thebes," he would say, "to show me thirty years of such patriotism as Corsica can boast!" Availing himself of the respite which the inactivity of the French and the weakness of the Genoese allowed, he prosecuted his plans of civilising the people. He used to say, that though he had an unspeakable pride in the prospect of the fame to which he aspired; yet, if he could but render his countrymen happy, he could be content to be forgotten. His own importance he never affected to undervalue. "We are now to our country," said he, "like the prophet Elisha, stretched over the dead child of the Shunamite,—eye to eye, nose to nose, mouth to mouth. It begins to recover warmth, and to revive: I hope it will yet regain full health and vigour."

But when the four years were expired, France purchased the sovereignty of Corsica from the Genoese for forty millions of livres; as if the Genoese had been entitled to sell it; as if any bargain and sale could justify one country in taking possession of another against the will of the inhabitants, and butchering all who oppose the usurpation! Among the enormities which France has committed, this action seems but as a speck; yet the foulest murderer that ever suffered by the hand of the executioner, has infinitely less guilt upon his soul than the statesman who concluded this treaty, and the monarch who sanctioned and confirmed it. A desperate and glorious resistance was made, but it was in vain; no power interposed in behalf of these injured islanders, and the French poured in as many troops as were required. They offered to confirm Paoli in the supreme authority, only on condition that he would hold it under their government. His answer was, that "the rocks which surrounded him should melt away before he would betray a cause which he held in common with the poorest Corsi-

can." This people then set a price upon his head. During two campaigns he kept them at bay—they overpowered him at length: he was driven to the shore, and, having escaped on shipboard, took refuge in England. It is said that Lord Shelburne resigned his seat in the cabinet because the ministry looked on, without attempting to prevent France from succeeding in this abominable and important act of aggrandizement. In one respect, however, our country acted as became her. Paoli was welcomed with the honours which he deserved, a pension of £1,200 was immediately granted him; and provision was liberally made for his elder brother and his nephew.

About twenty years Paoli remained in England, enjoying the friendship of the wise, and the admiration of the good. But when the French Revolution began, it seemed as if the restoration of Corsica was at hand. The whole country, as if animated by one spirit, rose and demanded liberty, and the national assembly passed a decree recognising the island as a department of France, and therefore entitled to all the privileges of the new French constitution. This satisfied the Corsicans, which it ought not to have done; and Paoli, in whom the ardour of youth was passed, seeing that his countrymen were contented, and believing that they were about to enjoy a state of freedom, naturally wished to return to his native country. He resigned his pension in the year 1790, and appeared at the bar of the assembly with the Corsican deputies, when they took the oath of fidelity to France. But the course of events in France soon dispelled those hopes of a new and better order of things, which Paoli, in common with so many of the friends of humankind, had indulged; and perceiving, after the execution of the king, that a civil war was about to ensue, of which no man could foresee the issue, he prepared to break the connexion between Corsica and the French republic. The convention suspecting such a design, and perhaps occasioning it by their suspicions, ordered him to their bar. That way, he well knew, led to the guillotine; and, returning a respectful answer, he declared that he would never be found wanting in his duty, but pleaded age and infirmity as a reason for disobeying the summons. Their second order was more summary; and the French troops, who were in Corsica, aided by those of the natives, who were either influenced

by hereditary party feelings, or who were sincere in jacobinism, took the field against him. But the people were with him. He repaired to Corte, the capital of the island, and was again invested with the authority which he had held in the noonday of his fame. The convention upon this denounced him as a rebel, and set a price upon his head. It was not the first time that France had proscribed Paoli.

Paoli now opened a correspondence with Lord Hood, promising, if the English would make an attack upon St. Fiorenzo from the sea, he would at the same time attack it by land. This promise he was unable to perform; and Commodore Linzee, who, in reliance upon it, was sent upon this service, was repulsed with some loss. Lord Hood, who had now been compelled to evacuate Toulon, suspected Paoli of intentionally deceiving him. This was an injurious suspicion. Shortly afterwards he despatched Lieutenant-Colonel (afterward Sir John) Moore and Major Kœhler to confer with him upon a plan of operations. Sir Gilbert Elliot accompanied them; and it was agreed that, in consideration of the succours, both military and naval, which his Britannic Majesty should afford for the purpose of expelling the French, the island of Corsica should be delivered into the immediate possession of his Majesty, and bind itself to acquiesce in any settlement he might approve of concerning its government, and its future relation with Great Britain. While this negotiation was going on, Nelson cruised off the island with a small squadron, to prevent the enemy from throwing in supplies. Close to St. Fiorenzo the French had a storehouse of flour, near their only mill: he watched an opportunity, and landed one hundred and twenty men, who threw the flour into the sea, burnt the mill, and re-embarked before one thousand men, who were sent against him, could occasion them the loss of a single man. While he exerted himself thus, keeping out all supplies, intercepting despatches, attacking their outposts and forts, and cutting out vessels from the bay,—a species of warfare which depresses the spirit of an enemy even more than it injures them, because of the sense of individual superiority which it indicates in the assailants,—troops were landed, and St. Fiorenzo was besieged. The French, finding themselves unable to maintain their post, sunk one of their frigates, burnt another, and retreated to

Bastia. Lord Hood submitted to General Dundas, who commanded the land forces, a plan for the reduction of this place: the general declined co-operating, thinking the attempt impracticable without a reinforcement of two thousand men, which he expected from Gibraltar. Upon this Lord Hood determined to reduce it with the naval force under his command; and leaving part of his fleet off Toulon, he came with the rest to Bastia.

He showed a proper sense of respect for Nelson's services, and of confidence in his talents, by taking care not to bring with him any older captain. A few days before their arrival, Nelson had had what he called a brush with the enemy. "If I had had with me five hundred troops," he said, "to a certainty I should have stormed the town; and I believe it might have been carried. Armies go so slow, that seamen think they never mean to get forward; but I dare say they act on a surer principle, although we seldom fail." During this partial action our army appeared upon the heights; and, having reconnoitered the place, returned to St. Fiorenzo. "What the general could have seen to make a retreat necessary," said Nelson, "I cannot comprehend. A thousand men would certainly take Bastia: with five hundred and the Agamemnon I would attempt it. My seamen are now what British seamen ought to be—almost invincible. They really mind shot no more than peas." General Dundas had not the same confidence. "After mature consideration," he said in a letter to Lord Hood, "and a personal inspection for several days of all circumstances, local as well as others, I consider the siege of Bastia, with our present means and force, to be a most visionary and rash attempt—such as no officer would be justified in undertaking." Lord Hood replied, that nothing would be more gratifying to his feelings than to have the whole responsibility upon himself; and that he was ready and willing to undertake the reduction of the place at his own risk, with the force and means at present there. General D'Aubant, who succeeded at this time to the command of the army, coincided in opinion with his predecessor, and did not think it right to furnish his lordship with a single soldier, cannon, or any stores. Lord Hood could only obtain a few artillerymen; and ordering on board that part of the troops who, having been embarked as marines, were borne

on the ships' books as part of their respective complements, he began the siege with eleven hundred and eighty-three soldiers, artillerymen, and marines, and two hundred and fifty sailors. "We are but few," said Nelson, "but of the right sort; our general at St. Fiorenzo not giving us one of the five regiments he has there lying idle."

These men were landed on the 4th of April, under Lieutenant-Colonel Villettes and Nelson, who had now acquired from the army the title of brigadier. Guns were dragged by the sailors up heights where it appeared almost impossible to convey them—a work of the greatest difficulty, and which Nelson said could never, in his opinion, have been accomplished by any but British seamen. The soldiers, though less dexterous in such service, because not accustomed, like sailors, to habitual dexterity, behaved with equal spirit. "Their zeal," said the brigadier, "is almost unexampled. There is not a man but considers himself as personally interested in the event, and deserted by the general. It has, I am persuaded, made them equal to double their numbers." This is one proof, of many, that for our soldiers to equal our seamen, it is only necessary for them to be equally well commanded. They have the same heart and soul, as well as the same flesh and blood. Too much may, indeed, be exacted from them in a retreat; but set their face toward a foe, and there is nothing within the reach of human achievement which they cannot perform. The French had improved the leisure which our military commander had allowed them; and before Lord Hood commenced his operations, he had the mortification of seeing that the enemy were every day erecting new works, strengthening old ones, and rendering the attempt more difficult. La Combe St. Michel, the commissioner from the national convention, who was in the city, replied in these terms to the summons of the British admiral: "I have hot shot for your ships, and bayonets for your troops. When two-thirds of our men are killed, I will then trust to the generosity of the English." The siege, however, was not sustained with the firmness which such a reply seemed to augur. On the 19th of May a treaty of capitulation was begun; that same evening the troops from St. Fiorenzo made their appearance on the hills; and, on the following morning General d'Aubant arrived with the whole army to take possession of Bastia.

The event of the siege had justified the confidence of the sailors; but they themselves excused the opinion of the generals, when they saw what they had done. "I am all astonishment," said Nelson, "when I reflect on what we have achieved; one thousand regulars, fifteen hundred national guards, and a large party of Corsican troops, four thousand in all, laying down their arms to twelve hundred soldiers, marines, and seamen! I always was of opinion, have ever acted up to it, and never had any reason to repent it, that one Englishman was equal to three Frenchmen. Had this been an English town, I am sure it would not have been taken by them." When it had been resolved to attack the place, the enemy were supposed to be far inferior in number; and it was not till the whole had been arranged, and the siege publicly undertaken, that Nelson received certain information of the great superiority of the garrison. This intelligence he kept secret, fearing lest, if so fair a pretext were afforded, the attempt would be abandoned. "My own honour," said he to his wife, "Lord Hood's honour, and the honour of our country, must have been sacrificed, had I mentioned what I knew; therefore you will believe what must have been my feelings during the whole siege, when I had often proposals made to me to write to Lord Hood to raise it." Those very persons who thus advised him, were rewarded for their conduct at the siege of Bastia: Nelson, by whom it may truly be affirmed that Bastia was taken, received no reward. Lord Hood's thanks to him, both public and private, were, as he himself said, the handsomest which man could give; but his signal merits were not so mentioned in the despatches as to make them sufficiently known to the nation, nor to obtain for him from government those honours to which they so amply entitled him. This could only have arisen from the haste in which the despatches were written; certainly not from any deliberate purpose, for Lord Hood was uniformly his steady and sincere friend.

One of the cartel's ships, which carried the garrison of Bastia to Toulon, brought back intelligence that the French were about to sail from that port;—such exertions had they made to repair the damage done at the evacuation, and to fit out a fleet. The intelligence was speedily verified. Lord Hood sailed in quest of them toward the islands of

Hieres. The Agamemnon was with him. "I pray God," said Nelson, writing to his wife, "that we may meet their fleet. If any accident should happen to me, I am sure my conduct will be such as will entitle you to the royal favour; not that I have the least idea but I shall return to you, and full of honour: if not, the Lord's will be done. My name shall never be a disgrace to those who may belong to me. The little I have I have given to you, except a small annuity —I wish it was more; but I have never got a farthing dishonestly: it descends from clean hands. Whatever fate awaits me, I pray God to bless you, and preserve you, for your son's sake." With a mind thus prepared, and thus confident, his hopes and wishes seemed on the point of being gratified, when the enemy were discovered close under the land, near St. Tropez. The wind fell, and prevented Lord Hood from getting between them and the shore, as he designed: boats came out from Antibes and other places, to their assistance, and towed them within the shoals in Gourjean Roads, where they were protected by the batteries on isles St. Honoré and St. Marguérite, and on Cape Garousse. Here the English admiral planned a new mode of attack, meaning to double on five of the nearest ships; but the wind again died away, and it was found that they had anchored in compact order, guarding the only passage for large ships. There was no way of effecting this passage, except by towing or warping the vessels; and this rendered the attempt impracticable. For this time the enemy escaped; but Nelson bore in mind the admirable plan of attack which Lord Hood had devised, and there came a day when they felt its tremendous effects.

The Agamemnon was now despatched to co-operate at the siege of Calvi with General Sir Charles Stuart; an officer who, unfortunately for his country, never had an adequate field allotted him for the display of those eminent talents which were, to all who knew him, so conspicuous.* Nelson had less responsibility here than at Bastia; and was acting with a man after his own heart, who was never sparing of himself, and slept every night in the advanced battery. But the service was not less hard than that of the former siege. "We will fag ourselves to death," said he to Lord Hood,

* Lord Melville was fully sensible of these talents, and bore testimony to them in the handsomest manner after Sir Charles's death.

"before any blame shall lie at our doors. I trust it will not be forgotten, that twenty-five pieces of heavy ordnance have been dragged to the different batteries, mounted, and, all but three, fought by seamen, except one artilleryman to point the guns." The climate proved more destructive than the service; for this was during the lion sun, as they there call our season of the dog-days. Of two thousand men, above half were sick, and the rest like so many phantoms. Nelson described himself as the reed among the oaks, bowing before the storm when they were laid low by it. "All the prevailing disorders have attacked me," said he, "but I have not strength enough for them to fasten on." The loss from the enemy was not great; but Nelson received a serious injury: a shot struck the ground near him, and drove the sand and small gravel into one of his eyes. He spoke of it slightly at the time: writing the same day to Lord Hood, he only said, that he got a little hurt that morning, not much; and the next day, he said, he should be able to attend his duty in the evening. In fact, he suffered it to confine him only one day; but the sight was lost.

After the fall of Calvi, his services were, by a strange omission, altogether overlooked; and his name was not even mentioned in the list of wounded. This was no ways imputable to the admiral, for he sent home to government Nelson's journal of the siege, that they might fully understand the nature of his indefatigable and unequalled exertions. If those exertions were not rewarded in the conspicuous manner which they deserved, the fault was in the administration of the day, not in Lord Hood. Nelson felt himself neglected. "One hundred and ten days," said he, "I have been actually engaged at sea and on shore against the enemy; three actions against ships, two against Bastia in my ship, four boat actions, and two villages taken, and twelve sail of vessels burnt. I do not know that any one has done more. I have had the comfort to be always applauded by my commander-in-chief, but never to be rewarded; and, what is more mortifying, for services in which I have been wounded, others have been praised, who, at the same time, were actually in bed, far from the scene of action. They have not done me justice. But never mind, I'll have a gazette of my own." How amply was this second-sight of glory realized!

The health of his ship's company had now, in his own words, been miserably torn to pieces by as hard service as a ship's crew ever performed: one hundred and fifty were in their beds when he left Calvi; of them he lost fifty, and believed that the constitutions of the rest were entirely destroyed. He was now sent with despatches to Mr. Drake, at Genoa, and had his first interview with the doge. The French had, at this time, taken possession of Vado Bay, in the Genoese territory; and Nelson foresaw that, if their thoughts were bent on the invasion of Italy, they would accomplish it the ensuing spring. "The allied powers," he said, "were jealous of each other; and none but England was hearty in the cause." His wish was for peace, on fair terms, because England he thought was draining herself to maintain allies who would not fight for themselves. Lord Hood had now returned to England, and the command devolved on Admiral Hotham. The affairs of the Mediterranean wore at this time a gloomy aspect. The arts, as well as the arms of the enemy, were gaining the ascendancy there. Tuscany concluded peace, relying upon the faith of France, which was, in fact, placing itself at her mercy. Corsica was in danger. We had taken that island for ourselves, annexed it formally to the crown of Great Britain, and given it a constitution as free as our own. This was done with the consent of the majority of the inhabitants; and no transaction between two countries was ever more fairly or legitimately conducted: yet our conduct was unwise—the island is large enough to form an independent state, and such we should have made it, under our protection, as long as protection might be needed; the Corsicans would then have felt as a nation; but, when one party had given up the country to England, the natural consequence was, that the other looked to France. The question proposed to the people was, to which would they belong? Our language and our religion were against us; our unaccommodating manners, it is to be feared, still more so. The French were better politicians. In intrigue they have ever been unrivalled; and it now became apparent that, in spite of old wrongs, which ought never to have been forgotten nor forgiven, their partisans were daily acquiring strength. It is part of the policy of France, and a wise policy it is, to impress upon other powers the opinion of its strength, by lofty language, and by threat-

ening before it strikes; a system which, while it keeps up the spirit of its allies, and perpetually stimulates their hopes, tends also to dismay its enemies. Corsica was now loudly threatened. The French, who had not yet been taught to feel their own inferiority upon the seas, braved us in contempt upon that element. They had a superior fleet in the Mediterranean and they sent it out with express orders to seek the English and engage them. Accordingly, the Toulon fleet, consisting of seventeen ships of the line and five smaller vessels, put to sea. Admiral Hotham received this information at Leghorn, and sailed immediately in search of them. He had with him fourteen sail of the line, and one Neapolitan seventy-four; but his ships were only half-manned, containing but seven thousand six hundred and fifty men, whereas the enemy had sixteen thousand nine hundred. He soon came in sight of them—a general action was expected; and Nelson, as was his custom on such occasions, wrote a hasty letter to his wife, as that which might possibly contain his last farewell. "The lives of all," said he, "are in the hand of Him who knows best whether to preserve mine or not; my character and good name are in my own keeping."

But however confident the French government might be of their naval superiority, the officers had no such feeling; and after manœuvring for a day in sight of the English fleet, they suffered themselves to be chased. One of their ships, the Ca Ira, of eighty-four guns, carried away her main and fore top-masts. The Inconstant frigate fired at the disabled ship, but received so many shot that she was obliged to leave her. Soon afterwards a French frigate took the Ca Ira in tow; and the Sans-Culottes, one hundred and twenty, and the Jean Barras, seventy-four, kept about gunshot distance on her weather bow. The Agamemnon stood towards her, having no ship of the line to support her within several miles. As she drew near, the Ca Ira fired her stern guns so truly, that not a shot missed some part of the ship, and, latterly, the masts were struck by every shot. It had been Nelson's intention not to fire before he touched her stern; but seeing how impossible it was that he should be supported, and how certainly the Agamemnon must be severely cut up if her masts were disabled, he altered his plan according to the occasion.

As soon, therefore, as he was within a hundred yards of her stern, he ordered the helm to be put a-starboard, and the driver and after-sails to be brailed up and shivered; and, as the ship fell off, gave the enemy her whole broadside. They instantly braced up the after-yards, put the helm a-port, and stood after her again. This manœuvre he practised for two hours and a quarter, never allowing the Ca Ira to get a single gun from either side to bear on him; and when the French fired their after-guns now, it was no longer with coolness and precision, for every shot went far a-head. By this time her sails were hanging in tatters, her mizen-top-mast, mizen-top-sail, and cross-jack-yards shot away. But the frigate which had her in tow hove in stays, and got her round. Both these French ships now brought their guns to bear, and opened their fire. The Agamemnon passed them within half pistol-shot; almost every shot passed over her, for the French had elevated their guns for the rigging, and for distant firing, and did not think of altering the elevation. As soon as the Agamemnon's after-guns ceased to bear, she hove in stays, keeping a constant fire as she came round; and being worked, said Nelson, with as much exactness as if she had been turning into Spithead. On getting round, he saw that the Sans-Culottes, which had wore, with many of the enemy's ships, was under his lee bow, and standing to leeward. The admiral, at the same time, made the signal for the van ships to join him. Upon this Nelson bore away, and prepared to set all sail; and the enemy, having saved their ship, hauled close to the wind, and opened upon him a distant and ineffectual fire. Only seven of the Agamemnon's men were hurt—a thing which Nelson himself remarked as wonderful: her sails and rigging were very much cut, and she had many shots in her hull, and some between wind and water. The Ca Ira lost one hundred and ten men that day, and was so cut up that she could not get a top-mast aloft during the night.

At daylight on the following morning, the English ships were taken aback with a fine breeze at N.W., while the enemy's fleet kept the southerly wind. The body of their fleet was about five miles distant; the Ca Ira and the Censeur, seventy-four, which had her in tow, about three and a half. All sail was made to cut these ships off; and, as the French attempted to save them, a partial action was brought

on. The Agamemnon was again engaged with her yesterday's antagonist; but she had to fight on both sides the ship at the same time. The Ca Ira and the Censeur fought most gallantly: the first lost nearly three hundred men, in addition to her former loss; the last, three hundred and fifty. Both at length struck; and Lieutenant Andrews, of the Agamemnon, brother to the lady to whom Nelson had become attached in France, and, in Nelson's own words, "as gallant an officer as ever stepped a quarter-deck," hoisted English colours on board them both. The rest of the enemy's ships behaved very ill. As soon as these vessels had struck, Nelson went to Admiral Hotham, and proposed that the two prizes should be left with the Illustrious and Courageux, which had been crippled in the action, and with four frigates, and that the rest of the fleet should pursue the enemy, and follow up the advantage to the utmost. But his reply was—"We must be contented: we have done very well."—"Now," said Nelson, "had we taken ten sail, and allowed the eleventh to escape, when it had been possible to have got at her, I could never have called it well done.* Goodall backed me; I got him to write to the admiral; but it would not do. We should have had such a day as, I believe, the annals of England never produced." In this letter, the character of Nelson fully manifests itself. "I wish," said he, "to be an admiral, and in the command of the English fleet: I should very soon either do much, or be ruined: my disposition cannot bear tame and slow measures. Sure I am, had I commanded on the 14th, that either the whole French fleet would have graced my triumph, or I should have been in a confounded scrape." What the event would have been, he knew from his prophetic feelings and his own consciousness of power; and we also know it now, for Aboukir and Trafalgar have told it.

The Ca Ira and Censeur probably defended themselves with more obstinacy in this action, from a persuasion that, if they struck, no quarter would be given; because they had fired red-hot shot, and had also a preparation sent, as they said, by the convention from Paris, which seems to have been of the nature of the Greek fire; for it became liquid

* "I can, *entre nous*," says Sir William Hamilton, in a letter to Nelson, "perceive that my old friend, Hotham, is not quite awake enough for such a command as that of the king's fleet in the Mediterranean, although he appears the best creature imaginable."

when it was discharged, and water would not extinguish its flames. This combustible was concealed with great care in the captured ships; like the red-hot shot, it had been found useless in battle. Admiral Hotham's action saved Corsica for the time; but the victory had been incomplete, and the arrival at Toulon of six sail of the line, two frigates, and two cutters from Brest, gave the French a superiority which, had they known how to use it, would materially have endangered the British Mediterranean fleet. That fleet had been greatly neglected at the admiralty during Lord Chatham's administration; and it did not, for some time, feel the beneficial effect of his removal. Lord Hood had gone home to represent the real state of affairs, and solicit reinforcements adequate to the exigencies of the time, and the importance of the scene of action. But that fatal error of underproportioning the force to the service; that ruinous economy, which, by sparing a little, renders all that is spent useless, infected the British councils: and Lord Hood, not being able to obtain such reinforcements as he knew were necessary, resigned the command. "Surely," said Nelson, "the people at home have forgotten us." Another Neapolitan seventy-four joined Admiral Hotham, and Nelson observed with sorrow, that this was matter of exultation to an English fleet. When the store-ships and victuallers from Gilbraltar arrived, their escape from the enemy was thought wonderful; and yet, had they not escaped, "the game," said Nelson, "was up here. At this moment our operations are at a stand for want of ships to support the Austrians in getting possession of the sea-coast of the king of Sardinia; and behold our admiral does not feel himself equal to show himself, much less to give assistance in their operations." It was reported that the French were again out with eighteen or twenty sail. The combined British and Neapolitan were but sixteen; should the enemy be only eighteen, Nelson made no doubt of a complete victory; but if they were twenty, he said, it was not to be expected; and a battle, without complete victory, would have been destruction, because another mast was not to be got on that side Gibraltar. At length Admiral Man arrived with a squadron from England. "What they can mean by sending him with only five sail of the line," said Nelson, "is truly astonishing; but all men are alike, and we in this country do not find any amendment or alter-

ation from the old Board of Admiralty. They should know that half the ships in the fleet require to go to England; and that long ago they ought to have reinforced us."

About this time Nelson was made colonel of marines; a mark of approbation which he had long wished for rather than expected. It came in good season, for his spirits were oppressed by the thought that his services had not been acknowledged as they deserved; and it abated the resentful feeling which would else have been excited by the answer to an application to the war-office. During his four months' land service in Corsica, he had lost all his ship furniture, owing to the movements of a camp. Upon this he wrote to the secretary at war, briefly stating what his services on shore had been, and saying, he trusted it was not asking an improper thing to request that the same allowance might be made to him which would be made to a land officer of his rank, which, situated as he was, would be that of a brigadier-general: if this could not be accorded, he hoped that his additional expenses would be paid him. The answer which he received was, that "no pay had ever been issued under the direction of the war-office to officers of the navy serving with the army on shore."

He now entered upon a new line of service. The Austrian and Sardinian armies, under General de Vins, required a British squadron to co-operate with them in driving the French from the Riviera di Genoa, and as Nelson had been so much in the habit of soldiering, it was immediately fixed that the brigadier should go. He sailed from St. Fiorenzo on this destination; but fell in, off Cape del Mele, with the enemy's fleet, who immediately gave his squadron chase. The chase lasted four-and-twenty hours; and, owing to the fickleness of the wind, the British ships were sometimes hard pressed; but the want of skill on the part of the French gave Nelson many advantages. He bent his way back to St. Fiorenzo, where the fleet, which was in the midst of watering and refitting, had, for seven hours, the mortification of seeing him almost in possession of the enemy, before the wind would allow them to put out to his assistance. The French, however, at evening, went off, not choosing to approach nearer the shore. During the night, Admiral Hotham, by great exertions, got under weigh; and, having sought the

enemy four days, came in sight of them on the fifth. Baffling winds and vexatious calms, so common in the Mediterranean, rendered it impossible to close with them; only a partial action could be brought on; and then the firing made a perfect calm. The French being to windward, drew inshore; and the English fleet was becalmed six or seven miles to the westward. L'Alcide, of seventy-four guns, struck; but before she could be taken possession of, a box of combustibles in her fore-top took fire, and the unhappy crew experienced how far more perilous their inventions were to themselves than to their enemies. So rapid was the conflagration, that the French in their official account say, the hull, the masts, and sails, all seemed to take fire at the same moment; and though the English boats were put out to the assistance of the poor wretches on board, not more than two hundred could be saved. The Agamemnon, and Captain Rowley, in the Cumberland, were just getting into close action a second time, when the admiral called them off, the wind now blowing directly into the Gulf of Frejus, where the enemy anchored after the evening closed.

Nelson now proceeded to his station with eight sail of frigates under his command. Arriving at Genoa, he had a conference with Mr. Drake, the British envoy to that state; the result of which was, that the object of the British must be, to put an entire stop to all trade between Genoa, France, and the places occupied by the French troops; for, unless this trade were stopped, it would be scarcely possible for the allied armies to hold their situation, and impossible for them to make any progress in driving the enemy out of the Riviera di Genoa. Mr. Drake was of opinion, that even Nice might fall for want of supplies, if the trade with Genoa were cut off. This sort of blockade Nelson could not carry on without great risk to himself. A captain in the navy, as he represented to the envoy, is liable to prosecution for detention and damages. This danger was increased by an order which had then lately been issued; by which, when a neutral ship was detained, a complete specification of her cargo was directed to be sent to the secretary of the Admiralty, and no legal process instituted against her till the pleasure of that board should be communicated. This was requiring an impossibility. The cargoes of ships detained upon this station consisting chiefly of corn would be spoiled

long before the orders of the Admiralty could be known; and then, if they should happen to release the vessel, the owners would look to the captain for damages. Even the only precaution which could be taken against this danger, involved another danger not less to be apprehended: for if the captain should direct the cargo to be taken out, the freight paid for, and the vessel released, the agent employed might prove fraudulent, and become bankrupt; and in that case the captain became responsible. Such things had happened: Nelson therefore required, as the only means for carrying on that service, which was judged essential to the common cause, without exposing the officers to ruin, that the British envoy should appoint agents to pay the freight, release the vessels, sell the cargo, and hold the amount till process was had upon it: government thus securing its officers. "I am acting," said Nelson, "not only without the orders of my commander-in-chief, but, in some measure, contrary to him. However, I have not only the support of his majesty's ministers, both at Turin and Genoa, but a consciousness that I am doing what is right and proper for the service of our king and country. Political courage, in an officer abroad, is as highly necessary as military courage."

This quality, which is as much rarer than military courage as it is more valuable, and without which the soldier's bravery is often of little avail, Nelson possessed in an eminent degree. His representations were attended to as they deserved. Admiral Hotham commended him for what he had done; and the attention of government was awakened to the injury which the cause of the allies continually suffered from the frauds of neutral vessels. "What changes in my life of activity!" said this indefatigable man. "Here I am; having commenced a co-operation with an old Austrian general, almost fancying myself charging at the head of a troop of horse! I do not write less than from ten to twenty letters every day; which, with the Austrian general and aides-de-camp, and my own little squadron, fully employ my time. This I like; active service, or none." It was Nelson's mind which supported his feeble body through these exertions. He was at this time almost blind, and wrote with very great pain. "Poor Agamemnon," he sometimes said, "was as nearly worn out as her captain; and both must soon be laid up to repair."

When Nelson first saw General de Vins, he thought him an able man, who was willing to act with vigour. The general charged his inactivity upon the Piedmontese and Neapolitans, whom, he said, nothing could induce to act; and he concerted a plan with Nelson, for embarking a part of the Austrian army, and landing it in the rear of the French. But the English commodore soon began to suspect that the Austrian general was little disposed to any active operations. In the hope of spurring him on, he wrote to him, telling him that he had surveyed the coast to the westward as far as Nice, and would undertake to embark four or five thousand men, with their arms and a few day's provisions, on board the squadron, and land them within two miles of St. Remo, with their field pieces. Respecting farther provisions for the Austrian army, he would provide convoys, that they should arrive in safety; and, if a re-embarkation should be found necessary, he would cover it with the squadron. The possession of St. Remo, as head-quarters for magazines of every kind, would enable the Austrian general to turn his army to the eastward or westward. The enemy at Oneglia would be cut off from provisions, and men could be landed to attack that place whenever it was judged necessary. St. Remo was the only place between Vado and Ville Franche where the squadron could lie in safety, and anchor in almost all winds. The bay was not as good as Vado for large ships; but it had a mole, which Vado had not, where all small vessels could lie, and load and unload their cargoes. This bay being in possession of the allies, Nice could be completely blockaded by sea. General de Vins affecting, in his reply, to consider that Nelson's proposal had no other end than that of obtaining the bay of St. Remo as a station for the ships, told him, what he well knew, and had expressed before, that Vado Bay was a better anchorage; nevertheless, if *Monsieur le Commandant Nelson* was well assured that part of the fleet could winter there, there was no risk to which he would not expose himself with pleasure, for the sake of procuring a safe station for the vessels of his Britannic Majesty. Nelson soon assured the Austrian commander that this was not the object of his memorial. He now began to suspect that both the Austrian court and their general had other ends in view than the cause of the allies. "This army," said he,

"is slow beyond all description; and I begin to think that the Emperor is anxious to touch another four millions of English money. As for the German generals, war is their trade, and peace is ruin to them; therefore we cannot expect that they should have any wish to finish the war. The politics of courts are so mean, that private people would be ashamed to act in the same way; all is trick and finesse, to which the common cause is sacrificed. The general wants a loop-hole: it has for some time appeared to me that he means to go no farther than his present position, and to lay the miscarriage of the enterprise against Nice, which has always been held out as the great object of his army, to the non-co-operation of the British fleet, and of the Sardinians."

To prevent this plea, Nelson again addressed De Vins, requesting only to know the time, and the number of troops ready to embark; then he would, he said, despatch a ship to Admiral Hotham, requesting transports, having no doubt of obtaining them, and trusting that the plan would be successful to its fullest extent. Nelson thought at the time that, if the whole fleet were offered him for transports, he would find some other excuse; and Mr. Drake, who was now appointed to reside at the Austrian head-quarters, entertained the same idea of the general's sincerity. It was not, however, put so clearly to the proof as it ought to have been. He replied that, as soon as Nelson could declare himself ready with the vessels necessary for conveying ten thousand men, with their artillery and baggage, he would put the army in motion. But Nelson was not enabled to do this: Admiral Hotham, who was highly meritorious in leaving such a man so much at his own discretion, pursued a cautious system, ill according with the bold and comprehensive views of Nelson, who continually regretted Lord Hood, saying that the nation had suffered much by his resignation of the Mediterranean command. The plan which had been concerted, he said, would astonish the French, and perhaps the English.

There was no unity in the views of the allied powers, no cordiality in their co-operation, no energy in their councils. The neutral powers assisted France more effectually than

the allies assisted each other. The Genoese ports were at this time filled with French privateers, which swarmed out every night, and covered the gulf; and French vessels were allowed to tow out of the port of Genoa itself, board vessels which were coming in, and then return into the mole. This was allowed without a remonstrance; while, though Nelson abstained most carefully from offering any offence to the Genoese territory or flag, complaints were so repeatedly made against his squadron, that, he says, it seemed a trial who should be tired first; they of complaining, or he of answering their complaints. But the question of neutrality was soon at an end. An Austrian commissary was travelling from Genoa towards Vado; it was known that he was to sleep at Voltri, and that he had £10,000 with him: a booty which the French minister in that city, and the captain of a French frigate in that port, considered as far more important than the word of honour of the one, the duties of the other, and the laws of neutrality. The boats of the frigate went out with some privateers, landed, robbed the commissary, and brought back the money to Genoa. The next day men were publicly enlisted in that city for the French army: seven hundred men were embarked, with seven thousand stand of arms, on board the frigates and other vessels, who were to land between Voltri and Savona: there a detachment from the French army was to join them, and the Genoese peasantry were to be invited to insurrection—a measure for which everything had been prepared. The night of the 13th was fixed for the sailing of this expedition: the Austrians called loudly for Nelson to prevent it; and he, on the evening of the 13th, arrived at Genoa. His presence checked the plan: the frigate, knowing her deserts, got within the merchant-ships, in the inner mole; and the Genoese government did not now even demand of Nelson respect to the neutral port, knowing that they had allowed, if not connived at, a flagrant breach of neutrality, and expecting the answer which he was prepared to return, that it was useless and impossible for him to respect it longer.

But though this movement produced the immediate effect which was designed, it led to ill consequences, which Nelson foresaw, but, for want of sufficient force, was unable to prevent. His squadron was too small for the service which it

had to perform. He required two seventy-fours, and eight or ten frigates and sloops; but when he demanded this reinforcement, Admiral Hotham had left the command; Sir Hyde Parker succeeded till the new commander should arrive; and he immediately reduced it to almost nothing, leaving him only one frigate and a brig. This was a fatal error. While the Austrian and Sardinian troops, whether from the imbecility or the treachery of their leaders, remained inactive, the French were preparing for the invasion of Italy. Not many days before Nelson was thus summoned to Genoa, he chased a large convoy into Alassio. Twelve vessels he had formerly destroyed in that port, though two thousand French troops occupied the town: this former attack had made them take new measures of defence; and there were now above one hundred sail of victuallers, gun-boats, and ships of war. Nelson represented to the Admiral how important it was to destroy these vessels; and offered, with his squadron of frigates, and the Culloden and Courageux, to lead himself in the Agamemnon, and take or destroy the whole. The attempt was not permitted; but it was Nelson's belief that, if it had been made, it would have prevented the attack upon the Austrian army, which took place almost immediately afterwards.

General de Vins demanded satisfaction of the Genoese government for the seizure of his commissary; and then, without waiting for their reply, took possession of some empty magazines of the French, and pushed his sentinels to the very gates of Genoa. Had he done so at first, he would have found the magazines full; but, timed as the measure was, and useless as it was to the cause of the allies, it was in character with the whole of the Austrian general's conduct; and it is no small proof of the dexterity with which he served the enemy, that in such circumstances he could so act with Genoa, as to contrive to put himself in the wrong. Nelson was at this time, according to his own expression, placed in a cleft stick. Mr. Drake, the Austrian minister, and the Austrian general, all joined in requiring him not to leave Genoa: if he left that port unguarded, they said, not only the imperial troops at St. Pier d'Arena and Voltri would be lost, but the French plan for taking post between Voltri and Savona would certainly succeed; if the Austrians should be worsted in the advanced posts

the retreat of the Bocchetta would be cut off; and, if this happened, the loss of the army would be imputed to him, for having left Genoa. On the other hand, he knew that if he were not at Pietra, the enemy's gun-boats would harass the left flank of the Austrians, who, if they were defeated, as was to be expected, from the spirit of all their operations, would, very probably, lay their defeat to the want of assistance from the Agamemnon. Had the force for which Nelson applied been given him, he could have attended to both objects; and had he been permitted to attack the convoy in Alassio, he would have disconcerted the plans of the French, in spite of the Austrian general. He had foreseen the danger, and pointed out how it might be prevented; but the means of preventing it were withheld. The attack was made as he fore-saw; and the gun-boats brought their fire to bear upon the Austrians. It so happened, however, that the left flank, which was exposed to them, was the only part of the army that behaved well: this division stood its ground till the centre and the right wing fled, and then retreated in a soldierlike manner. General de Vins gave up the command in the middle of the battle, pleading ill health. "From that moment," says Nelson, "not a soldier staid at his post: it was the devil take the hindmost. Many thousands ran away who had never seen the enemy; some of them thirty miles from the advanced posts. Had I not, though I own, against my inclination, been kept at Genoa, from eight to ten thousand men would have been taken prisoners, and, amongst the number, General de Vins himself; but, by this means, the pass of the Bocchetta was kept open. The purser of the ship, who was at Vado, ran with the Austrians eighteen miles without stopping; the men without arms, officers without soldiers, women without assistance. The oldest officers say, they never heard of so complete a defeat, and certainly without any reason. Thus has ended my campaign.—We have established the French republic; which, but for us, I verily believe, would never have been settled by such a volatile, changeable people. I hate a Frenchman: they are equally objects of my detestation whether royalists or republicans: in some points, I believe, the latter are the best." Nelson had a lieutenant and two midshipmen taken at Vado—they told him, in their letter,

that few of the French soldiers were more than three or four and twenty years old, a great many not more than fourteen, and all were nearly naked; they were sure, they said, his barge's crew could have beat a hundred of them; and that, had he himself seen them, he would not have thought, if the world had been covered with such people, that they could have beaten the Austrian army.

The defeat of General de Vins gave the enemy possession of the Genoese coast from Savona to Voltri; and it deprived the Austrians of their direct communication with the English fleet. The Agamemnon, therefore, could no longer be useful on this station, and Nelson sailed for Leghorn to refit. When his ship went into dock, there was not a mast, yard, sail, or any part of the rigging, but what stood in need of repair, having been cut to pieces with shot. The hull was so damaged that it had for some time been secured by cables, which were served or thrapped round it.

CHAPTER IV.

Sir J. Jervis takes the command—Genoa joins the French—Buonaparte begins his career—Evacuation of Corsica—Nelson hoists his broad pendant in the Minerve—Action with the Sabina—Battle off Cape St. Vincent—Nelson commands the inner Squadron at the Blockade of Cadiz—Boat Action in the Bay of Cadiz—Expedition against Teneriffe—Nelson loses an Arm—His Sufferings in England, and Recovery.

Sir John Jervis had now arrived to take the command of the Mediterranean fleet. The Agamemnon having, as her captain said, been made as fit for sea as a rotten ship could be, Nelson sailed from Leghorn, and joined the admiral in Fiorenzo Bay. "I found him," said he, "anxious to know many things, which I was a good deal surprised to find had not been communicated to him by others in the fleet; and it would appear that he was so well satisfied with my opinion of what is likely to happen, and the means of prevention to be taken, that he had no reserve with me respecting his information and ideas of what is likely to be done." The manner in which Nelson was received is said to have excited some envy. One captain observed to him: "You did just as you pleased in Lord Hood's time, the same in Admiral Hotham's, and now again with Sir John Jervis: it

makes no difference to you who is commander-in-chief." A higher compliment could not have been paid to any commander-in-chief than to say of him, that he understood the merits of Nelson, and left him, as far as possible, to act upon his own judgment.

Sir John Jervis offered him the St. George, ninety, or the Zealous, seventy-four, and asked if he should have any objection to serve under him with his flag. He replied, that if the Agamemnon were ordered home, and his flag were not arrived, he should, on many accounts, wish to return to England: still, if the war continued, he should be very proud of hoisting his flag under Sir John's command. "We cannot spare you," said Sir John, "either as captain or admiral." Accordingly, he resumed his station in the Gulf of Genoa. The French had not followed up their successes in that quarter with their usual celerity. Schérer, who commanded there, owed his advancement to any other cause than his merit: he was a favourite of the directory; but, for the present, through the influence of Barras, he was removed from a command for which his incapacity was afterwards clearly proved, and Buonaparte was appointed to succeed him. Buonaparte had given indications of his military talents at Toulon, and of his remorseless nature at Paris; but the extent, either of his ability or his wickedness was at this time known to none, and, perhaps, not even suspected by himself.

Nelson supposed, from the information which he had obtained, that one column of the French army would take possession of Port Especia; either penetrating through the Genoese territory, or proceeding coastways in light vessels; our ships of war not being able to approach the coast, because of the shallowness of the water. To prevent this, he said, two things were necessary—the possession of Vado Bay, and the taking of Port Especia: if either of these points were secured, Italy would be safe from any attack of the French by sea. General Beaulieu, who had now superseded De Vins in the command of the allied Austrian and Sardinian army, sent his nephew and aide-de-camp to communicate with Nelson, and inquire whether he could anchor in any other place than Vado Bay. Nelson replied, that Vado was the only place where the British fleet could

lie in safety, but all places would suit his squadron; and wherever the general came down to the sea-coast, there he should find it. The Austrian repeatedly asked, if there was not a risk of losing the squadron? and was constantly answered, that if these ships should be lost, the admiral would find others. But all plans of co-operation with the Austrians were soon frustrated by the battle of Montenotte. Beaulieu ordered an attack to be made upon the post of Voltri. It was made twelve hours before the time which he had fixed, and before he arrived to direct it. In consequence, the French were enabled to effect their retreat, and fall back to Montenotte, thus giving the troops there a decisive superiority in number over the division which attacked them. This drew on the defeat of the Austrians. Buonaparte, with a celerity which had never before been witnessed in modern war, pursued his advantages; and, in the course of a fortnight, dictated to the court of Turin terms of peace, or rather of submission; by which all the strongest places of Piedmont were put into his hands.

On one occasion, and only on one, Nelson was able to impede the progress of this new conqueror. Six vessels, laden with cannon and ordnance-stores for the siege of Mantua, sailed from Toulon for St. Pier d'Arena. Assisted by Captain Cockburn, in the Meleager, he drove them under a battery; pursued them, silenced the batteries, and captured the whole. Military books, plans, and maps of Italy, with the different points marked upon them where former battles had been fought, sent by the directory for Buonaparte's use, were found in the convoy. The loss of this artillery was one of the chief causes which compelled the French to raise the siege of Mantua; but there was too much treachery, and too much imbecility, both in the councils and armies of the allied powers, for Austria to improve this momentary success. Buonaparte perceived that the conquest of all Italy was within his reach; treaties, and the rights of neutral or of friendly powers, were as little regarded by him as by the government for which he acted: in open contempt of both he entered Tuscany, and took possession of Leghorn. In consequence of this movement, Nelson blockaded that port, and landed a British force in the Isle of Elba, to secure Porto Ferrajo. Soon afterwards he took the Island of Capraja, which had for-

merly belonged to Corsica, being less than forty miles distant from it; a distance however, short as it was, which enabled the Genoese to retain it, after their infamous sale of Corsica to France. Genoa had now taken part with France: its government had long covertly assisted the French, and now willingly yielded to the first compulsory menace which required them to exclude the English from their ports. Capraja was seized in consequence; but this act of vigour was not followed up as it ought to have been. England at that time depended too much upon the feeble governments of the continent, and too little upon itself. It was determined by the British cabinet to evacuate Corsica, as soon as Spain should form an offensive alliance with France. This event, which, from the moment that Spain had been compelled to make peace, was clearly foreseen, had now taken place; and orders for the evacuation of the island were immediately sent out. It was impolitic to annex this island to the British dominions; but, having done so, it was disgraceful thus to abandon it. The disgrace would have been spared, and every advantage which could have been derived from the possession of the island secured, if the people had at first been left to form a government for themselves, and protected by us in the enjoyment of their independence.

The viceroy, Sir Gilbert Elliott, deeply felt the impolicy and ignominy of this evacuation. The fleet also was ordered to leave the Mediterranean. This resolution was so contrary to the last instructions which had been received, that Nelson exclaimed:—"Do his majesty's ministers know their own minds? They at home," said he, "do not know what this fleet is capable of performing—any thing and every thing. Much as I shall rejoice to see England, I lament our present orders in sackcloth and ashes, so dishonourable to the dignity of England, whose fleets are equal to meet the world in arms; and of all the fleets I ever saw, I never beheld one, in point of officers and men, equal to Sir John Jervis's, who is a commander-in-chief able to lead them to glory." Sir Gilbert Elliott believed that the great body of the Corsicans were perfectly satisfied, as they had good reason to be, with the British government, sensible of its advantages, and attached to it. However this may have been, when they found that

the English intended to evacuate the island, they naturally and necessarily sent to make their peace with the French. The partisans of France found none to oppose them. A committee of thirty took upon them the government of Bastia, and sequestrated all the British property; armed Corsicans mounted guard at every place, and a plan was laid for seizing the viceroy. Nelson, who was appointed to superintend the evacuation, frustrated these projects. At a time when every one else despaired of saving stores, cannon, provisions, or property of any kind, and a privateer was moored across the mole-head to prevent all boats from passing, he sent word to the committee, that if the slightest opposition were made to the embarkment and removal of British property, he would batter the town down. The privateer pointed her guns at the officer who carried this message, and muskets were levelled against his boats from the mole-head. Upon this, Captain Sutton, of the Egmont, pulling out his watch, gave them a quarter of an hour to deliberate upon their answer. In five minutes after the expiration of that time, the ships, he said, would open their fire. Upon this the very sentinels scampered off, and every vessel came out of the mole. A shipowner complained to the commodore, that the municipality refused to let him take his goods out of the custom-house. Nelson directed him to say, that unless they were instantly delivered, he would open his fire. The committee turned pale, and, without answering a word, gave him the keys. Their last attempt was to levy a duty upon the things that were re-embarked. He sent them word that he would pay them a disagreeable visit, if there were any more complaints. The committee then finding that they had to deal with a man who knew his own power, and was determined to make the British name respected, desisted from the insolent conduct which they had assumed; and it was acknowledged that Bastia never had been so quiet and orderly since the English were in possession of it. This was on the 14th of October; during the five following days the work of embarkation was carried on, the private property was saved, and public stores to the amount of £200,000. The French, favoured by the Spanish fleet, which was at that time within twelve leagues of Bastia, pushed over troops from Leghorn, who landed near Cape Corse on the 18th; and, on the 20th, at

one in the morning, entered the citadel, an hour only after the British had spiked the guns and evacuated it. Nelson embarked at daybreak, being the last person who left the shore; having thus, as he said, seen the first and the last of Corsica. Provoked at the conduct of the municipality, and the disposition which the populace had shown to profit by the confusion, he turned towards the shore, as he stepped into his boat, and exclaimed: "Now, John Corse, follow the natural bent of your detestable character—plunder and revenge." This, however, was not Nelson's deliberate opinion of the people of Corsica; he knew that their vices were the natural consequences of internal anarchy and foreign oppression, such as the same causes would produce in any people; and when he saw, that of all those who took leave of the viceroy, there was not one who parted from him without tears, he acknowledged that they manifestly acted not from dislike of the English, but from fear of the French. England then might, with more reason, reproach her own rulers for pusillanimity, than the Corsicans for ingratitude.

Having thus ably effected this humiliating service, Nelson was ordered to hoist his broad pendant on board the Minerve frigate, Capt. George Cockburn, and with the Blanche under his command, proceed to Porto Ferrajo, and superintend the evacuation of that place also. On his way, he fell in with two Spanish frigates, the Sabina and the Ceres. The Minerve engaged the former, which was commanded by D. Jacobo Stuart, a descendant of the Duke of Berwick. After an action of three hours, during which the Spaniards lost one hundred and sixty-four men, the Sabina struck. The Spanish captain, who was the only surviving officer, had hardly been conveyed on board the Minerve, when another enemy's frigate came up, compelled her to cast off the prize, and brought her a second time to action. After half-an-hour's trial of strength, this new antagonist wore and hauled off; but a Spanish squadron of two ships of the line and two frigates came in sight. The Blanche, from which the Ceres had got off, was far to windward, and the Minerve escaped only by the anxiety of the enemy to recover their own ship. As soon as Nelson reached Porto Ferrajo he sent his prisoner in a flag of truce to Carthagena, having returned him his sword; this he did in honour of the gallantry which D. Jacobo had displayed, and not without some feeling of respect

for his ancestry. "I felt it," said he, "consonant to the dignity of my country, and I always act as I feel right, without regard to custom: he was reputed the best officer in Spain, and his men were worthy of such a commander." By the same flag of truce he sent back all the Spanish prisoners at Porto Ferrajo; in exchange for whom he received his own men who had been taken in the prize.

General de Burgh, who commanded at the Isle of Elba, did not think himself authorized to abandon the place till he had received specific instructions from England to that effect; professing that he was unable to decide between the contradictory orders of Government, or to guess at what their present intentions might be; but he said, his only motive for urging delay in this measure arose from a desire that his own conduct might be properly sanctioned, not from any opinion that Porto Ferrajo ought to be retained. But Naples having made peace, Sir J. Jervis considered his business with Italy as concluded; and the protection of Portugal was the point to which he was now instructed to attend. Nelson, therefore, whose orders were perfectly clear and explicit, withdrew the whole naval establishment from that station, leaving the transports victualled, and so arranged that all the troops and stores could be embarked in three days. He was now about to leave the Mediterranean. Mr. Drake, who had been our minister at Genoa, expressed to him, on this occasion, the very high opinion which the allies entertained of his conspicuous merit; adding, that it was impossible for any one, who had the honour of co-operating with him, not to admire the activity, talents, and zeal, which he had so eminently and constantly displayed. In fact, during this long course of services in the Mediterranean, the whole of his conduct had exhibited the same zeal, the same indefatigable energy, the same intuitive judgment, the same prompt and unerring decision, which characterised his after-career of glory. His name was as yet hardly known to the English public; but it was feared and respected throughout Italy. A letter came to him, directed "Horatio Nelson, Genoa;" and the writer, when he was asked how he could direct it so vaguely, replied, "Sir, there is but one Horatio Nelson in the world." At Genoa, in particular, where he had so long been stationed, and where the nature of his duty first led him to continual disputes with the government, and afterwards compelled him

to stop the trade of the port, he was equally respected by the doge and by the people: for, while he maintained the rights and interests of Great Britain with becoming firmness, he tempered the exercise of power with courtesy and humanity, wherever duty would permit. "Had all my actions," said he, writing at this time to his wife, "been gazetted, not one fortnight would have passed, during the whole war, without a letter from me. One day or other I will have a long gazette to myself. I feel that such an opportunity will be given me. I cannot, if I am in the field of glory, be kept out of sight: wherever there is anything to be done, there Providence is sure to direct my steps."

These hopes and anticipations were soon to be fulfilled. Nelson's mind had long been irritated and depressed by the fear that a general action would take place before he could join the fleet. At length he sailed from Porto Ferrajo with a convoy for Gibraltar; and having reached that place, proceeded to the westward in search of the admiral. Off the mouth of the Straits he fell in with the Spanish fleet; and, on the 13th of February, reaching the station off Cape St. Vincent, communicated this intelligence to Sir John Jervis. He was now directed to shift his broad pendant on board the Captain, seventy-four, Capt. R. W. Miller; and, before sunset, the signal was made to prepare for action, and to keep, during the night, in close order. At daybreak the enemy were in sight. The British force consisted of two ships of one hundred guns, two of ninety-eight, two of ninety, eight of seventy-four, and one sixty-four; fifteen of the line in all; with four frigates, a sloop, and a cutter. The Spaniards had one four-decker, of one hundred and thirty-six guns; six three-deckers, of one hundred and twelve; two eighty-fours; eighteen seventy-fours; in all, twenty-seven ships of the line, with ten frigates and a brig. Their admiral, D. Joseph de Cordova, had learnt from an American, on the 5th, that the English had only nine ships, which was indeed the case when his informer had seen them; for a reinforcement of five ships from England, under Admiral Parker, had not then joined, and the Culloden had parted company. Upon this information, the Spanish commander, instead of going into Cadiz, as was his intention when he sailed from Carthagena, determined to seek an enemy so inferior in force; and relying, with fatal confidence,

upon the American account, he suffered his ships to remain too far dispersed, and in some disorder. When the morning of the 14th broke, and discovered the English fleet, a fog for some time concealed their number. That fleet had heard their signal-guns during the night, the weather being fine, though thick and hazy; soon after daylight they were seen very much scattered, while the British ships were in a compact little body. The look-out ship of the Spaniards fancying that her signal was disregarded, because so little notice seemed to be taken of it, made another signal, that the English force consisted of forty sail of the line. The captain afterwards said, he did this to rouse the admiral: it had the effect of perplexing him and alarming the whole fleet. The absurdity of such an act shows what was the state of the Spanish navy under that miserable government, by which Spain was so long oppressed and degraded, and finally betrayed. In reality, the general incapacity of the naval officers was so well known, that in a pasquinade, which about this time appeared at Madrid, wherein the different orders of the state were advertised for sale, the greater part of the sea-officers, with all their equipments, were offered as a gift; and it was added, that any person who would please to take them, should receive a handsome gratuity. When the probability that Spain would take part in the war, as an ally of France, was first contemplated, Nelson said that their fleet, if it were no better than when it acted in alliance with us, would "soon be done for."

Before the enemy could form a regular order of battle, Sir J. Jervis, by carrying a press of sail, came up with them, passed through their fleet, then tacked, and thus cut off nine of their ships from the main body. These ships attempted to form on the larboard tack, either with a design of passing through the British line, or to leeward of it, and thus rejoining their friends. Only one of them succeeded in this attempt; and that only because she was so covered with smoke that her intention was not discovered till she had reached the rear: the others were so warmly received, that they put about, took to flight, and did not appear again in the action till its close. The admiral was now able to direct his attention to the enemy's main body, which was still superior in number to his whole fleet, and greatly so in weight of metal. He made signal to tack in succession. Nelson, whose station

was in the rear of the British line, perceived that the Spaniards were bearing up before the wind, with an intention of forming their line, going large, and joining their separated ships, or else of getting off without an engagement. To prevent either of these schemes, he disobeyed the signal without a moment's hesitation, and ordered his ship to be wore. This at once brought him into action with the Santissima Trinidad, one hundred and thirty-six; the San Joseph, one hundred and twelve; the Salvador del Mundo, one hundred and twelve; the San Nicolas, eighty; the San Isidro, seventy-four, another seventy-four, and another first-rate. Trowbridge, in the Culloden, immediately joined, and most nobly supported him; and for nearly an hour did the Culloden and Captain maintain what Nelson called "this apparently, but not really unequal contest;"—such was the advantage of skill and discipline, and the confidence which brave men derive from them. The Blenheim then passing between them and the enemy, gave them a respite, and poured in her fire upon the Spaniards. The Salvador del Mundo and San Isidro dropped astern, and were fired into in a masterly style, by the Excellent, Capt. Collingwood. The San Isidro struck; and Nelson thought that the Salvador struck also. "But Collingwood," says he, "disdaining the parade of taking possession of beaten enemies, most gallantly pushed up, with every sail set, to save his old friend and messmate, who was, to appearance, in a critical situation;" for the Captain was at this time actually fired upon by three first-rates—by the San Nicolas, and by a seventy-four within about pistol-shot of that vessel. The Blenheim was ahead, the Culloden crippled and astern. Collingwood ranged up, and hauling up his mainsail just astern, passed within ten feet of the San Nicolas, giving her a most tremendous fire, then passed on for the Santissima Trinidad. The San Nicolas luffing up, the San Joseph fell on board her, and Nelson resumed his station abreast of them, and close alongside. The Captain was now incapable of farther service, either in the line or in chase: she had lost her foretop-mast; not a sail, shroud, or rope was left, and her wheel was shot away. Nelson therefore directed Capt. Miller to put the helm a-starboard, and calling for the boarders, ordered them to board.

Capt. Berry, who had lately been Nelson's first lieutenant,

was the first man who leaped into the enemy's mizen chains. Miller, when in the very act of going, was ordered by Nelson to remain. Berry was supported from the spritsail-yard, which locked in the San Nicolas's main rigging. A soldier of the sixty-ninth broke the upper quarter-gallery window, and jumped in, followed by the commodore himself, and by others as fast as possible. The cabin doors were fastened, and the Spanish officers fired their pistols at them through the window; the doors were soon forced, and the Spanish brigadier fell while retreating to the quarter-deck. Nelson pushed on, and found Berry in possession of the poop, and the Spanish ensign hauling down. He passed on to the forecastle, where he met two or three Spanish officers, and received their swords. The English were now in full possession of every part of the ship, when a fire of pistols and musketry opened upon them from the admiral's stern-gallery of the San Joseph. Nelson having placed sentinels at the different ladders, and ordered Capt. Miller to send more men into the prize, gave orders for boarding that ship from the San Nicolas. It was done in an instant, he himself leading the way, and exclaiming—"Westminster Abbey or victory!" Berry assisted him into the main chains; and at that moment a Spanish officer looked over the quarter-deck rail, and said they surrendered. It was not long before he was on the quarter-deck, where the Spanish captain presented to him his sword, and told him the admiral was below dying of his wounds. There, on the quarter-deck of an enemy's first-rate, he received the swords of the officers, giving them, as they were delivered, one by one to William Fearney, one of his old Agamemnon's, who, with the utmost coolness, put them under his arm, "bundling them up," in the lively expression of Collingwood, "with as much composure as he would have made a faggot, though twenty-two sail of their line were still within gunshot." One of his sailors came up, and, with an Englishman's feeling, took him by the hand, saying he might not soon have such another place to do it in, and he was heartily glad to see him there. Twenty-four of the Captain's men were killed, and fifty-six wounded; a fourth part of the loss sustained by the whole squadron falling upon this ship. Nelson received only a few bruises.

The Spaniards had still eighteen or nineteen ships which

had suffered little or no injury: that part of the fleet which had been separated from the main body in the morning was now coming up, and Sir John Jervis made signal to bring to. His ships could not have formed without abandoning those which they had captured, and running to leeward: the Captain was lying a perfect wreck on board her two prizes; and many of the other vessels were so shattered in their masts and rigging, as to be wholly unmanageable. The Spanish admiral meantime, according to his official account, being altogether undecided in his own opinion respecting the state of the fleet, inquired of his captains whether it was proper to renew the action; nine of them answered explicitly that it was not; others replied that it was expedient to delay the business. The Pelayo and the Prince Conquistador were the only ships that were for fighting.

As soon as the action was discontinued, Nelson went on board the admiral's ship. Sir John Jervis received him on the quarter-deck, took him in his arms, and said he could not sufficiently thank him. For this victory the commander-in-chief was rewarded with the title of Earl St. Vincent.*

* In the official letter of Sir John Jervis, Nelson was not mentioned. It is said that the admiral had seen an instance of the ill consequence of such selections after Lord Howe's victory; and, therefore, would not name any individual, thinking it proper to speak to the public only in terms of general approbation. His private letter to the first lord of the Admiralty was, with his consent, published, for the first time, in a Life of Nelson, by Mr. Harrison. Here, it is said, that "Commodore Nelson, who was in the rear, on the starboard tack, took the lead on the larboard, and contributed very much to the fortune of the day." It is also said, that he boarded the two Spanish ships successively; but the fact that Nelson wore without orders, and thus planned as well as accomplished the victory, is not explicitly stated. Perhaps it was thought proper to pass over this part of his conduct in silence, as a splendid fault; but such an example is not dangerous. The author of the work in which this letter was first made public, protests against those over-zealous friends, "who would make the action rather appear as Nelson's battle than that of the illustrious commander-in-chief, who derives from it so deservedly his title. No man," he says, "ever less needed, or less desired, to strip a single leaf from the honoured wreath of any other hero, with the vain hope of augmenting his own, than the immortal Nelson: no man ever more merited the whole of that which a generous nation unanimously presented to Sir J. Jervis, than the Earl St. Vincent." Certainly Earl St. Vincent well deserved the reward which he received; but it is not detracting from his merit to say, that Nelson is fully entitled to as much fame from this action as the commander-in-chief; not because the brunt of the action fell upon him;

Nelson, who before the action was known in England, had been advanced to the rank of rear-admiral, had the Order of the Bath given him. The sword of the Spanish rear-admiral, which Sir John Jervis insisted upon his keeping, he presented to the mayor and corporation of Norwich, saying, that he knew no place where it could give him or his family more pleasure to have it kept than in the capital city of the county where he was born. The freedom of that city was voted him on this occasion. But of all the numerous congratulations which he received, none could have affected him with deeper delight than that which came from his venerable father. "I thank my God," said this excellent man, "with all the power of a grateful soul, for the mercies he has most graciously bestowed on me in preserving you. Not only my few acquaintance here, but the people in general, met me at every corner with such handsome words, that I was obliged to retire from the public eye. The height of glory to which your professional judgment, united with a proper degree of bravery, guarded by Providence, has raised you, few sons, my dear child, attain to, and fewer fathers live to see. Tears of joy have involuntarily trickled down my furrowed cheeks: who could stand the force of such general congratulation? The name and services of Nelson have sounded through this city of Bath—from the common ballad-singer to the public theatre." The good old man concluded by telling him that the field of glory, in which he had so long been conspicuous, was still open, and by giving him his blessing.

Sir Horatio, who had now hoisted his flag as rear-admiral of the blue, was sent to bring away the troops from Porto Ferrajo; having performed this, he shifted his flag to the Theseus. That ship had taken part in the mutiny in England, and being just arrived from home, some danger was

not because he was engaged with all the four ships which were taken, and took two of them, it may almost be said, with his own hand; but because the decisive movement, which enabled him to perform all this, and by which the action became a victory, was executed in neglect of orders, upon his own judgment, and at his peril. Earl St. Vincent deserved his earldom; but it is not to the honour of those by whom titles were distributed in those days, that Nelson never obtained the rank of earl for either of those victories which he lived to enjoy, though the one was the most complete and glorious in the annals of naval history, and the other the most important in its consequences of any which was achieved during the whole war.

apprehended from the temper of the men. This was one reason why Nelson was removed to her. He had not been on board many weeks before a paper, signed in the name of all the ship's company, was dropped on the quarter-deck, containing these words: "Success attend Admiral Nelson! God bless Capt. Miller! We thank them for the officers they have placed over us. We are happy and comfortable, and will shed every drop of blood in our veins to support them; and the name of the Theseus shall be immortalised as high as her captain's." Wherever Nelson commanded, the men soon became attached to him; in ten days' time he would have restored the most mutinous ship in the navy to order. Whenever an officer fails to win the affections of those who are under his command, he may be assured that the fault is chiefly in himself.

While Sir Horatio was in the Theseus, he was employed in the command of the inner squadron at the blockade of Cadiz. During this service, the most perilous action occurred in which he was ever engaged. Making a night attack upon the Spanish gun-boats, his barge was attacked by an armed launch, under their commander, D. Miguel Tregoyen, carrying twenty-six men. Nelson had with him only his ten bargemen, Capt. Freemantle, and his coxswain, John Sykes, an old and faithful follower, who twice saved the life of his admiral by parrying the blows that were aimed at him, and, at last, actually interposed his own head to receive the blow of a Spanish sabre, which he could not by any other means avert; thus dearly was Nelson beloved. This was a desperate service—hand to hand with swords; and Nelson always considered that his personal courage was more conspicuous on this occasion than on any other during his whole life. Notwithstanding the great disproportion of numbers, eighteen of the enemy were killed, all the rest wounded, and their launch taken. Nelson would have asked for a lieutenancy for Sykes, if he had served long enough; his manner and conduct, he observed, were so entirely above his situation, that Nature certainly intended him for a gentleman; but though he recovered from the dangerous wound which he received in this act of heroic attachment, he did not live to profit by the gratitude and friendship of his commander.

Twelve days after this rencontre, Nelson sailed at the head

of an expedition against Teneriffe. A report had prevailed a few months before, that the viceroy of Mexico, with the treasure ships, had put into that island. This had led Nelson to meditate the plan of an attack upon it, which he communicated to Earl St. Vincent. He was perfectly aware of the difficulties of the attempt. "I do not," said he, "reckon myself equal to Blake; but, if I recollect right, he was more obliged to the wind coming off the land, than to any exertions of his own. The approach by sea to the anchoring-place is under very high land, passing three valleys; therefore the wind is either in from the sea, or squally with calms from the mountains:" and he perceived, that if the Spanish ships were won, the object would still be frustrated, if the wind did not come off shore. The land force he thought, would render success certain; and there were the troops from Elba, with all necessary stores and artillery, already embarked. "But here," said he, "soldiers must be consulted; and I know, from experience, they have not the same boldness in undertaking a political measure that we have: we look to the benefit of our country, and risk our own fame every day to serve her; a soldier obeys his orders, and no more." Nelson's experience at Corsica justified him in this harsh opinion: he did not live to see the glorious days of the British army under Wellington. The army from Elba, consisting of three thousand seven hundred men, would do the business, he said, in three days, probably in much less time; and he would undertake, with a very small squadron, to perform the naval part; for, though the shore was not easy of access, the transports might run in and land the troops in one day.

The report concerning the viceroy was unfounded: but a homeward-bound Manilla ship put into Santa Cruz at this time, and the expedition was determined upon. It was not fitted out upon the scale which Nelson had proposed. Four ships of the line, three frigates, and the Fox cutter, formed the squadron; and he was allowed to choose such ships and officers as he thought proper. No troops were embarked; the seamen and marines of the squadron being thought sufficient. His orders were, to make a vigorous attack; but on no account to land in person, unless his presence should be absolutely necessary. The plan was, that the boats should land in the night, between the fort on the N.E. side of Santa

Cruz bay and the town, make themselves masters of that fort, and then send a summons to the governor. By midnight, the three frigates, having the force on board which was intended for this debarkation, approached within three miles of the place; but, owing to a strong gale of wind in the offing, and a strong current against them in-shore, they were not able to get within a mile of the landing-place before daybreak; and then they were seen, and their intention discovered. Trowbridge and Bowen, with Capt. Oldfield, of the marines, went upon this to consult with the admiral what was to be done; and it was resolved that they should attempt to get possession of the heights above the fort. The frigates accordingly landed their men; and Nelson stood in with the line-of-battle ships, meaning to batter the fort for the purpose of distracting the attention of the garrison. A calm and contrary current hindered him from getting within a league of the shore; and the heights were by this time so secured, and manned with such a force, as to be judged impracticable. Thus foiled in his plans by circumstances of wind and tide, he still considered it a point of honour that some attempt should be made. This was on the twenty-second of July: he re-embarked his men that night, got the ships on the 24th to anchor about two miles north of the town, and made show as if he intended to attack the heights. At six in the evening signal was made for the boats to prepare to proceed on the service as previously ordered.

When this was done, Nelson addressed a letter to the commander-in-chief—the last which was ever written with his right hand. "I shall not," said he, "enter on the subject, why we are not in possession of Santa Cruz. Your partiality will give credit, that all has hitherto been done which was possible, but without effect. This night I, humble as I am, command the whole destined to land under the batteries of the town; and, to-morrow, my head will probably be crowned either with laurel or cypress. I have only to recommend Josiah Nisbet to you and my country. The Duke of Clarence, should I fall, will, I am confident, take a lively interest for my son-in-law, on his name being mentioned." Perfectly aware how desperate a service this was likely to prove, before he left the Theseus he called Lieutenant Nisbet, who had the watch on deck, into the cabin, that he might assist in arrang-

ing and burning his mother's letters. Perceiving that the young man was armed, he earnestly begged him to remain behind. "Should we both fall, Josiah," said he, "what would become of your poor mother! The care of the Theseus falls to you: stay, therefore, and take charge of her." Nisbet replied: "Sir, the ship must take care of herself: I will go with you to-night, if I never go again."

He met his captains at supper on board the Seahorse, Captain Freemantle, whose wife, whom he had lately married in the Mediterranean, presided at table. At eleven o'clock the boats, containing between six and seven hundred men, with one hundred and eighty on board the Fox cutter, and from seventy to eighty in a boat which had been taken the day before, proceeded in six divisions toward the town, conducted by all the captains of the squadron, except Freemantle and Bowen, who attended with Nelson to regulate and lead the way to the attack. They were to land on the mole, and thence hasten as fast as possible into the great square; then form, and proceed, as should be found expedient. They were not discovered till about half-past one o'clock, when, being within half gun-shot of the landing-place, Nelson directed the boats to cast off from each other, give a huzza, and push for the shore. But the Spaniards were exceedingly well prepared: the alarm-bells answered the huzza, and a fire of thirty or forty pieces of cannon, with musketry from one end of the town to the other, opened upon the invaders. Nothing, however, could check the intrepidity with which they advanced. The night was exceedingly dark: most of the boats missed the mole, and went on shore through a raging surf, which stove all to the left of it. The Admiral, Freemantle, Thompson, Bowen, and four or five other boats, found the mole: they stormed it instantly, and carried it, though it was defended, as they imagined, by four or five hundred men. Its guns, which were six-and-twenty pounders, were spiked; but such a heavy fire of musketry and grape was kept up from the citadel and the houses at the head of the mole, that the assailants could not advance, and nearly all of them were killed or wounded.

In the act of stepping out of the boat, Nelson received a shot through the right elbow, and fell; but as he fell he

caught the sword, which he had just drawn, in his left hand, determined never to part with it while he lived, for it had belonged to his uncle, Captain Suckling, and he valued it like a relic. Nisbet, who was close to him, placed him at the bottom of the boat, and laid his hat over the shattered arm, lest the sight of the blood, which gushed out in great abundance, should increase his faintness. He then examined the wound, and taking some silk handkerchiefs from his neck, bound them round tight above the lacerated vessels. Had it not been for this presence of mind in his son-in-law, Nelson must have perished. One of his bargemen, by name Lovel, tore his shirt into shreds, and made a sling with them for the broken limb. They then collected five other seamen, by whose assistance they succeeded at length in getting the boat afloat; for it had grounded with the falling tide. Nisbet took one of the oars, and ordered the steersman to go close under the guns of the battery, that they might be safe from its tremendous fire. Hearing his voice, Nelson roused himself, and desired to be lifted up in the boat, that he might look about him. Nisbet raised him up; but nothing could be seen, except the firing of the guns on shore, and what could be discerned by their flashes upon a stormy sea. In a few minutes, a general shriek was heard from the crew of the Fox, which had received a shot under water, and went down. Ninety-seven men were lost in her: eighty-three were saved, many by Nelson himself, whose exertions on this occasion greatly increased the pain and danger of his wound. The first ship which the boat could reach happened to be the Seahorse; but nothing could induce him to go on board, though he was assured that if they attempted to row to another ship, it might be at the risk of his life. "I had rather suffer death," he replied, "than alarm Mrs. Freemantle, by letting her see me in this state, when I can give her no tidings whatever of her husband." They pushed on for the Theseus. When they came alongside, he peremptorily refused all assistance in getting on board, so impatient was he that the boat should return, in hopes that it might save a few more from the Fox. He desired to have only a single rope thrown over the side, which he twisted round his left hand, saying, "Let me alone; I have yet my legs left and one arm. Tell the surgeon to make haste and get his instruments. I know I must lose my right arm, so the sooner it

is off the better."* The spirit which he displayed in jumping up the ship's side astonished everybody.

Freemantle had been severely wounded in the right arm, soon after the admiral. He was fortunate enough to find a boat on the beach, and got instantly to his ship. Thompson was wounded: Bowen† killed, to the great regret of Nelson; as was also one of his own officers, Lieutenant Weatherhead, who had followed him from the Agamemnon, and whom he greatly and deservedly esteemed. Trowbridge, meantime, fortunately for his party missed the mole in the darkness, but pushed on shore under the batteries, close to the south end of the citadel. Capt. Waller of the Emerald, and two or three other boats, landed at the same time. The surf was so high that many others put back. The boats were instantly filled with water, and stove against the rocks; and most of the ammunition in the men's pouches was wetted. Having collected a few men, they pushed on to the great square, hoping there to find the Admiral and the rest of the force. The ladders were all lost, so that they could make no immediate attempt on the citadel; but they sent a sergeant with two of the town's-people to summon it: this messenger never returned; and Trowbridge having waited about an hour, in painful expectation of his friends, marched to join Captains Hood and Miller, who had effected their landing to the south-west. They then endeavoured to procure some intelligence of the Admiral and the rest of the officers, but without success. By daybreak they had gathered together

* During the peace of Amiens, when Nelson was passing through Salisbury, and received there with those acclamations which followed him everywhere, he recognised among the crowd a man who had assisted at the amputation, and attended him afterwards. He beckoned him up the stairs of the Council-house, shook hands with him, and made him a present in remembrance of his services at that time. The man took from his bosom a piece of lace, which he had torn from the sleeve of the amputated limb saying, he had preserved, and would preserve it to the last moment, in memory of his old commander.

† Captain Bowen's gold seals, and chain, and sword, were preserved in the town-house at Teneriffe; his watch and other valuables had been made booty of by the populace. In 1810, the magistrates of the island sent these memorials of the dead to his brother, commissioner Bowen, saying that they conceived it would be gratifying to his feelings to receive them, and that as the two nations were now united in a cause which did equal honour to both, they did not wish to retain a trophy which could remind them that they had ever been opposed to each other.—*Naval Chronicle, vol.* xxiv. *p.* 393.

about eighty marines, eighty pikemen, and one hundred and eighty small-arm seamen; all the survivors of those who had made good their landing. They obtained some ammunition from the prisoners whom they had taken, and marched on to try what could be done at the citadel without ladders. They found all the streets commanded by field-pieces, and several thousand Spaniards, with about a hundred French, under arms, approaching by every avenue. Finding himself without provisions, the powder wet, and no possibility of obtaining either stores or reinforcements from the ships, the boats being lost, Trowbridge, with great presence of mind, sent Capt. Samuel Hood with a flag of truce to the governor, to say he was prepared to burn the town, and would instantly set fire to it, if the Spaniards approached one inch nearer. This, however, if he were compelled to do it, he should do with regret, for he had no wish to injure the inhabitants; and he was ready to treat upon these terms—that the British troops should re-embark, with all their arms of every kind, and take their own boats, if they were saved, or be provided with such others as might be wanting: they, on their part, engaging that the squadron should not molest the town, nor any of the Canary Islands: all prisoners on both sides to be given up. When these terms were proposed, the governor made answer, that the English ought to surrender as prisoners of war; but Capt. Hood replied, he was instructed to say, that if the terms were not accepted in five minutes, Capt. Trowbridge would set the town on fire, and attack the Spaniards at the point of the bayonet. Satisfied with his success, which was indeed sufficiently complete, and respecting, like a brave and honourable man, the gallantry of his enemy, the Spaniard acceded to the proposal, found boats to re-embark them, their own having all been dashed to pieces in landing, and before they parted gave every man a loaf and a pint of wine. "And here," says Nelson in his journal, "it is right we should notice the noble and generous conduct of Don Juan Antonio Gutierrez, the Spanish governor. The moment the terms were agreed to, he directed our wounded men to be received into the hospitals, and all our people to be supplied with the best provisions that could be procured; and made it known, that the ships were at liberty to send on shore, and purchase whatever refreshments they were in

want of during the time they might be off the island." A youth, by name Don Bernardo Collagon, stripped himself of his shirt, to make bandages for one of those Englishmen, against whom, not an hour before, he had been engaged in battle. Nelson wrote to thank the governor for the humanity which he had displayed. Presents were interchanged between them. Sir Horatio offered to take charge of his despatches for the Spanish Government, and thus actually became the first messenger to Spain of his own defeat.

The total loss of the English, in killed, wounded, and drowned, amounted to two hundred and fifty. Nelson made no mention of his own wound in his official despatches; but in a private letter to Lord St. Vincent—the first which he wrote with his left hand—he shows himself to have been deeply affected by the failure of this enterprise. "I am become," he said, "a burthen to my friends, and useless to my country; but by my last letter you will perceive my anxiety for the promotion of my son-in-law, Josiah Nisbet. When I leave your command, I become dead to the world—'I go hence, and am no more seen.' If from poor Bowen's loss you think it proper to oblige me, I rest confident you will do it. The boy is under obligations to me, but he repaid me by bringing me from the mole of Santa Cruz. I hope you will be able to give me a frigate to convey the remains of my carcass to England."—"A left-handed admiral," he said in a subsequent letter, "will never again be considered as useful; therefore the sooner I get to a very humble cottage the better, and make room for a sounder man to serve the state." His first letter to Lady Nelson was written under the same opinion, but in a more cheerful strain. "It was the chance of war," said he, "and I have great reason to be thankful: and I know it will add much to your pleasure to find that Josiah, under God's providence, was principally instrumental in saving my life. I shall not be surprised if I am neglected and forgotten: probably I shall no longer be considered as useful; however I shall feel rich if I continue to enjoy your affection. I beg neither you nor my father will think much of this mishap; my mind has long been made up to such an event."

His son-in-law, according to his wish, was immediately promoted; and honours enough to heal his wounded spirit

awaited him in England. Letters were addressed to him by the first lord of the Admiralty, and by his steady friend, the Duke of Clarence, to congratulate him on his return, covered as he was with glory. He assured the duke, in his reply, that not a scrap of that ardour with which he had hitherto served his king had been shot away. The freedom of the cities of Bristol and London were transmitted to him; he was invested with the Order of the Bath, and received a pension of £1,000 a-year. The memorial which, as a matter of form, he was called upon to present on this occasion, exhibited an extraordinary catalogue of services performed during the war. It stated that he had been in four actions with the fleets of the enemy, and in three actions with boats employed in cutting out of harbour, in destroying vessels, and in taking three towns. He had served on shore with the army four months, and commanded the batteries at the sieges of Bastia and Calvi: he had assisted at the capture of seven sail of the line, six frigates, four corvettes, and eleven privateers: taken and destroyed near fifty sail of merchant vessels, and actually been engaged against the enemy upwards of a hundred and twenty times, in which service he had lost his right eye and right arm, and been severely wounded and bruised in his body.

His sufferings from the lost limb were long and painful. A nerve had been taken up in one of the ligatures at the time of the operation; and the ligature, according to the practice of the French surgeons, was of silk instead of waxed thread; this produced a constant irritation and discharge; and the ends of the ligature being pulled every day, in hopes of bringing it away, occasioned fresh agony. He had scarcely any intermission of pain, day or night, for three months after his return to England. Lady Nelson, at his earnest request, attended the dressing of his arm, till she had acquired sufficient resolution and skill to dress it herself. One night, during this state of suffering, after a day of constant pain, Nelson retired early to bed, in hope of enjoying some respite by means of laudanum. He was at that time lodging in Bond Street, and the family were soon disturbed by a mob knocking loudly and violently at the door. The news of Duncan's victory had been made public, and the house was not illuminated. But when the mob were told that Admiral Nelson lay there in bed, badly wounded, the foremost of

them made answer: "You shall hear no more from us to-night;" and in fact, the feeling of respect and sympathy was communicated from one to another with such effect that, under the confusion of such a night, the house was not molested again.

About the end of November, after a night of sound sleep, he found the arm nearly free from pain. The surgeon was immediately sent for to examine it; and the ligature came away with the slightest touch. From that time it began to heal. As soon as he thought his health established, he sent the following form of thanksgiving to the minister of St. George's, Hanover Square:—"An officer desires to return thanks to Almighty God for his perfect recovery from a severe wound, and also for the many mercies bestowed on him."

Not having been in England till now, since he lost his eye, he went to receive a year's pay, as smart money, but could not obtain payment, because he had neglected to bring a certificate from a surgeon, that the sight was actually destroyed. A little irritated that this form should be insisted upon, because, though the fact was not apparent, he thought it was sufficiently notorious, he procured a certificate at the same time for the loss of his arm; saying, they might just as well doubt one as the other. This put him in good humour with himself, and with the clerk who had offended him. On his return to the office, the clerk finding it was only the annual pay of a captain, observed, he thought it had been more. "Oh!" replied Nelson, "this is only for an eye. In a few days I shall come for an arm; and in a little time longer, God knows, most probably for a leg." Accordingly he soon afterwards went; and with perfect good humour exhibited the certificate of the loss of his arm.

CHAPTER V.

Nelson rejoins Earl St. Vincent in the Vanguard—Sails in pursuit of the French to Egypt—Returns to Sicily, and sails again to Egypt—Battle of the Nile.

Early in the year 1798, Sir Horatio Nelson hoisted his flag in the Vanguard, and was ordered to rejoin Earl St. Vincent. Upon his departure, his father addressed him with

that affectionate solemnity by which all his letters were distinguished. "I trust in the Lord," said he, "that he will prosper your going out and your coming in. I earnestly desired once more to see you, and that wish has been heard. If I should presume to say, I hope to see you again, the question would be readily asked, How old art thou? *Vale! vale! Domine, vale!*" It is said, that a gloomy foreboding hung on the spirits of Lady Nelson at their parting. This could have arisen only from the dread of losing him by the chance of war. Any apprehension of losing his affections could hardly have existed; for all his correspondence to this time shows that he thought himself happy in his marriage; and his private character had hitherto been as spotless as his public conduct. One of the last things he said to her was, that his own ambition was satisfied, but that he went to raise her to that rank in which he had long wished to see her.

Immediately on his rejoining the fleet, he was despatched to the Mediterranean with a small squadron, in order to ascertain, if possible, the object of the great expedition which at that time was fitting out under Buonaparte, at Toulon. The defeat of this armament, whatever might be its destination, was deemed by the British government an object paramount to every other; and Earl St. Vincent was directed, if he thought it necessary, to take his whole force into the Mediterranean, to relinquish, for that purpose, the blockade of the Spanish fleet, as a thing of inferior moment; but, if he should deem a detachment sufficient, "I think it almost unnecessary," said the first lord of the Admiralty in his secret instructions, "to suggest to you the propriety of putting it under Sir Horatio Nelson." It is to the honour of Earl St. Vincent, that he had already made the same choice. This appointment to a service in which so much honour might be acquired gave great offence to the senior admirals of the fleet. Sir Wm. Parker, who was a very excellent officer, and as gallant a man as any in the navy, and Sir John Orde, who on all occasions of service had acquitted himself with great honour, each wrote to Lord Spencer, complaining that so marked a preference should have been given to a junior of the same fleet. This resentment is what most men in a like case would feel; and if the preference thus given to Nelson had not originated in

a clear perception that (as his friend Collingwood said of him a little while before) his spirit was equal to all undertakings, and his resources fitted to all occasions, an injustice would have been done to them by his appointment. But if the services were conducted with undeviating respect to seniority, the naval and military character would soon be brought down to the dead level of mediocrity.

The armament at Toulon consisted of thirteen ships of the line, seven forty-gun frigates, with twenty-four smaller vessels of war, and nearly two hundred transports. Mr. Udney, our consul at Leghorn, was the first person who procured certain intelligence of the enemy's design against Malta; and, from his own sagacity, foresaw that Egypt must be their after object. Nelson sailed from Gibraltar on the 9th of May, with the Vanguard, Orion, and Alexander, seventy-fours; the Caroline, Flora, Emerald, and Terpsichore frigates; and the Bonne Citoyenne sloop of war, to watch this formidable armament. On the 19th, when they were in the Gulf of Lyons, a gale came on from the N.W. It moderated so much on the 20th as to enable them to get their topgallant masts and yards aloft. After dark it again began to blow strong, but the ships had been prepared for a gale, and therefore Nelson's mind was easy. Shortly after midnight, however, his main-topmast went over the side, and the mizen-topmast soon afterward. The night was so tempestuous that it was impossible for any signal either to be seen or heard; and Nelson determined, as soon as it should be daybreak, to wear, and scud before the gale; but at half-past three the fore-mast went in three pieces, and the bowsprit was found to be sprung in three places. When day broke they succeeded in wearing the ship with a remnant of the spritsail. This was hardly to have been expected. The Vanguard was at that time twenty-five leagues south of the island of Hieres, with her head lying to the N.E., and if she had not wore, the ship must have drifted to Corsica. Capt. Ball, in the Alexander, took her in tow, to carry her into the Sardinian harbour of St. Pietro. Nelson, apprehensive that this attempt might endanger both vessels, ordered him to cast off; but that excellent officer, with a spirit like his commander's, replied, he was confident he could save the Vanguard, and, by God's help, he would do it. There had been a previous coolness between these

great men; but from this time Nelson became fully sensible of the extraordinary talents of Captain Ball, and a sincere friendship subsisted between them during the remainder of their lives. "I ought not," said the admiral, writing to his wife—"I ought not to call what has happened to the Vanguard by the cold name of accident: I believe firmly it was the Almighty's goodness, to check my consummate vanity. I hope it has made me a better officer, as I feel confident it has made me a better man. Figure to yourself, on Sunday evening at sunset, a vain man walking in his cabin, with a squadron around him, who looked up to their chief to lead them to glory, and in whom their chief placed the firmest reliance that the proudest ships of equal numbers belonging to France would have lowered their flags; figure to yourself, on Monday morning, when the sun rose, this proud man, his ship dismasted, his fleet dispersed, and himself in such distress that the meanest frigate out of France would have been an unwelcome guest." Nelson had, indeed, more reason to refuse the cold name of accident to this tempest than he was then aware of, for on that very day the French fleet sailed from Toulon, and must have passed within a few leagues of his little squadron, which was thus preserved by the thick weather that came on.

The British Government at this time, with a becoming spirit, gave orders that any port in the Mediterranean should be considered as hostile where the governor or chief magistrate should refuse to let our ships of war procure supplies of provisions, or of any article which they might require.

In these orders the ports of Sardinia were excepted. The continental possessions of the King of Sardinia were at this time completely at the mercy of the French, and that prince was now discovering, when too late, that the terms to which he had consented, for the purpose of escaping immediate danger, necessarily involved the loss of the dominions which they were intended to preserve. The citadel of Turin was now occupied by French troops; and his wretched court feared to afford the common rights of humanity to British ships, lest it should give the French occasion to seize on the remainder of his dominions—a measure for which it was certain they would soon make a pretext, if they did not find

one. Nelson was informed that he could not be permitted to enter the port of St. Pietro. Regardless of this interdict, which, under his circumstances, it would have been an act of suicidal folly to have regarded, he anchored in the harbour; and, by the exertions of Sir James Saumarez, Capt. Ball, and Capt. Berry, the Vanguard was refitted in four days; months would have been employed in refitting her in England. Nelson, with that proper sense of merit, wherever it was found, which proved at once the goodness and the greatness of his character, especially recommended to Earl St. Vincent the carpenter of the Alexander, under whose directions the ship had been repaired; stating, that he was an old and faithful servant of the crown, who had been nearly thirty years a warrant carpenter, and begging most earnestly that the commander-in-chief would recommend him to the particular notice of the Board of Admiralty. He did not leave the harbour without expressing his sense of the treatment which he had received there, in a letter to the Viceroy of Sardinia. "Sir," it said, "having, by a gale of wind, sustained some trifling damages, I anchored a small part of his Majesty's fleet under my orders off this island, and was surprised to hear, by an officer sent by the governor, that admittance was to be refused to the flag of his Britannic Majesty into this port. When I reflect, that my most gracious sovereign is the oldest, I believe, and certainly the most faithful ally which the King of Sardinia ever had, I could feel the sorrow which it must have been to his majesty to have given such an order; and also for your excellency, who had to direct its execution. I cannot but look at the African shore, where the followers of Mahomet are performing the part of the good Samaritan, which I look for in vain at St. Peter's, where it is said the Christian religion is professed."

The delay which was thus occasioned was useful to him in many respects: it enabled him to complete his supply of water, and to receive a reinforcement which Earl St. Vincent, being himself reinforced from England, was enabled to send him. It consisted of the best ships of his fleet: the Culloden, seventy-four, Capt. T. Trowbridge; Goliath, seventy-four, Capt. T. Foley; Minotaur, seventy-four, Capt. T. Louis; Defence, seventy-four, Capt. John Peyton; Bellerophon, seventy-four, Capt. H. D. E. Darby; Majestic,

seventy-four, Capt. G. B. Westcott; Zealous, seventy-four, Capt. S. Hood; Swiftsure, seventy-four, Capt. B. Hallowell; Theseus, seventy-four, Capt. R. W. Miller; Audacious, seventy-four, Capt. Davidge Gould. The Leander, fifty, Capt. T. B. Thompson, was afterwards added. These ships were made ready for the service as soon as Earl St. Vincent received advice from England that he was to be reinforced. As soon as the reinforcement was seen from the mast-head of the admiral's ship, off Cadiz Bay, signal was immediately made to Capt. Trowbridge to put to sea; and he was out of sight before the ships from home cast anchor in the British station. Trowbridge took with him no instructions to Nelson as to the course he was to steer, nor any certain account of the enemy's destination: everything was left to his own judgment. Unfortunately, the frigates had been separated from him in the tempest, and had not been able to rejoin: they sought him unsuccessfully in the Bay of Naples, where they obtained no tidings of his course; and he sailed without them.

The first news of the enemy's armament was that it had surprised Malta. Nelson formed a plan for attacking it while at anchor at Gozo; but on the 22nd of June intelligence reached him that the French had left that island on the 16th, the day after their arrival. It was clear that their destination was eastward—he thought for Egypt—and for Egypt, therefore, he made all sail. Had the frigates been with him he could scarcely have failed to gain information of the enemy: for want of them, he only spoke three vessels on the way; two came from Alexandria, one from the Archipelago; and neither of them had seen anything of the French. He arrived off Alexandria on the 28th, and the enemy were not there, neither was there any account of them; but the governor was endeavouring to put the city in a state of defence, having received advice from Leghorn that the French expedition was intended against Egypt, after it had taken Malta. Nelson then shaped his course to the northward, for Caramania, and steered from thence along the southern side of Candia, carrying a press of sail both night and day, with a contrary wind. It would have been his delight, he said, to have tried Buonaparte on a wind. It would have been the delight of Europe, too, and the blessing of the world, if that fleet had been overtaken with its

general on board. But of the myriads and millions of human beings who would have been preserved by that day's victory there is not one to whom such essential benefit would have resulted as to Buonaparte himself. It would have spared him his defeat at Acre—his only disgrace; for to have been defeated by Nelson upon the seas would not have been disgraceful: it would have spared him all his after enormities. Hitherto his career had been glorious; the baneful principles of his heart had never yet passed his lips; history would have represented him as a soldier of fortune, who had faithfully served the cause in which he engaged; and whose career had been distinguished by a series of successes unexampled in modern times. A romantic obscurity would have hung over the expedition to Egypt, and he would have escaped the perpetration of those crimes which have incarnadined his soul with a deeper dye than that of the purple for which he committed them; those acts of perfidy, midnight murder, usurpation, and remorseless tyranny, which have consigned his name to universal execration, now and for ever.

Conceiving that when an officer is not successful in his plans it is absolutely necessary that he should explain the motives upon which they were founded, Nelson wrote at this time an account and vindication of his conduct for having carried the fleet to Egypt. The objection which he anticipated was that he ought not to have made so long a voyage, without more certain information. "My answer," said he, "is ready—Who was I to get it from? The governments of Naples and Sicily either knew not, or chose to keep me in ignorance. Was I to wait patiently until I heard certain accounts? If Egypt were their object, before I could hear of them they would have been in India. To do nothing was disgraceful; therefore I made use of my understanding. I am before your lordships' judgment; and if, under all circumstances, it is decided that I am wrong, I ought, for the sake of our country, to be superseded; for at this moment when I know the French are not in Alexandria, I hold the same opinion as off Cape Passaro,—that, under all circumstances, I was right in steering for Alexandria; and by that opinion I must stand or fall." Captain Ball, to whom he showed this paper, told him he should recommend a friend never to begin a defence of his conduct before he was

accused of error: he might give the fullest reasons for what he had done, expressed in such terms as would evince that he had acted from the strongest conviction of being right; and of course he must expect that the public would view it in the same light. Captain Ball judged rightly of the public, whose first impulses, though from want of sufficient information they must frequently be erroneous, are generally founded upon just feelings. But the public are easily misled, and there are always persons ready to mislead them. Nelson had not yet attained that fame which compels envy to be silent; and when it was known in England that he had returned after an unsuccessful pursuit, it was said that he deserved impeachment; and Earl St. Vincent was severely censured for having sent so young an officer upon so important a service.

Baffled in his pursuit, he returned to Sicily. The Neapolitan ministry had determined to give his squadron no assistance, being resolved to do nothing which could possibly endanger their peace with the French directory: by means, however, of Lady Hamilton's influence at court, he procured secret orders to the Sicilian governors; and, under those orders, obtained everything which he wanted at Syracuse—a timely supply; without which, he always said, he could not have recommenced his pursuit with any hope of success. "It is an old saying," said he, in his letter, "that the devil's children have the devil's luck. I cannot to this moment learn, beyond vague conjecture, where the French fleet are gone to; and having gone a round of six hundred leagues at this season of the year, with an expedition incredible, here I am, as ignorant of the situation of the enemy as I was twenty-seven days ago. Every moment I have to regret the frigates having left me; had one-half of them been with me, I could not have wanted information. Should the French be so strongly secured in port that I cannot get at them, I shall immediately shift my flag into some other ship, and send the Vanguard to Naples to be refitted; for hardly any person but myself would have continued on service so long in such a wretched state." Vexed, however, and disappointed as he was, Nelson, with the true spirit of a hero, was still full of hope. "Thanks to your exertions," said he, writing to Sir W. and Lady Hamilton, "we have victualled and watered: and surely watering at the fountain of Arethusa, we must have victory.

We shall sail with the first breeze; and be assured I will return either crowned with laurel, or covered with cypress." Earl St. Vincent he assured, that if the French were above water he would find them out: he still held his opinion that they were bound for Egypt: "but," said he to the first lord of the Admiralty, "be they bound to the Antipodes, your lordship may rely that I will not lose a moment in bringing them to action."

On the 25th of July he sailed from Syracuse for the Morea. Anxious beyond measure, and irritated that the enemy should so long have eluded him, the tediousness of the nights made him impatient; and the officer of the watch was repeatedly called on to let him know the hour, and convince him, who measured time by his own eagerness, that it was not yet daybreak. The squadron made the gulf of Coron on the 28th. Trowbridge entered the port, and returned with intelligence that the French had been seen about four weeks before steering to the S.E. from Candia. Nelson then determined immediately to return to Alexandria; and the British fleet accordingly, with every sail set, stood once more for the coast of Egypt. On the 1st of August, about ten in the morning, they came in sight of Alexandria; the port had been vacant and solitary when they saw it last; it was now crowded with ships; and they perceived with exultation that the tri-coloured flag was flying upon the walls. At four in the afternoon, Capt. Hood, in the Zealous, made the signal for the enemy's fleet. For many preceding days Nelson had hardly taken either sleep or food: he now ordered his dinner to be served, while preparations were making for battle; and when his officers rose from table, and went to their separate stations, he said to them, "Before this time to-morrow I shall have gained a peerage, or Westminster Abbey."

The French, steering direct for Candia, had made an angular passage for Alexandria; whereas Nelson, in pursuit of them, made straight for that place, and thus materially shortened the distance. The comparative smallness of his force made it necessary to sail in close order, and it covered a less space than it would have done if the frigates had been with him: the weather also was constantly hazy. These circumstances prevented the English from discovering the enemy on the way to Egypt, though it appeared, upon

examining the journals of the French officers taken in the action, that the two fleets must actually have crossed on the night of the 22nd of June. During the return to Syracuse, the chances of falling in with them were fewer.

Why Buonaparte, having effected his landing, should not have suffered the fleet to return, has never yet been explained. Thus much is certain, that it was detained by his command, though, with his accustomed falsehood, he accused Admiral Brueys, after that officer's death, of having lingered on the coast, contrary to orders. The French fleet arrived at Alexandria on the 1st of July, and Brueys, not being able to enter the port, which time and neglect had ruined, moored his ships in Aboukir Bay, in a strong and compact line of battle; the headmost vessel, according to his own account, being as close as possible to a shoal on the N. W., and the rest of the fleet forming a kind of curve along the line of deep water, so as not to be turned by any means in the S. W. By Buonaparte's desire he had offered a reward of 10,000 livres to any pilot of the country who would carry the squadron in, but none could be found who would venture to take charge of a single vessel drawing more than twenty feet. He had therefore made the best of his situation, and chosen the strongest position which he could possibly take in an open road. The commissary of the fleet said they were moored in such a manner as to bid defiance to a force more than double their own. This presumption could not then be thought unreasonable. Admiral Barrington, when moored in a similar manner off St. Lucia, in the year 1778, beat off the Comte d'Estaign in three several attacks, though his force was inferior by almost one-third to that which assailed it. Here, the advantage in numbers, both in ships, guns, and men, was in favour of the French. They had thirteen ships of the line and four frigates, carrying eleven hundred and ninety-six guns, and eleven thousand two hundred and thirty men. The English had the same number of ships of the line, and one fifty-gun ship, carrying ten hundred and twelve guns, and eight thousand and sixty-eight men. The English ships were all seventy-fours; the French had three eighty-gun ships, and one three-decker of one hundred and twenty.

During the whole pursuit, it had been Nelson's practice, whenever circumstances would permit, to have his captains

on board the Vanguard, and explain to them his own ideas of the different and best modes of attack, and such plans as he proposed to execute on falling in with the enemy, whatever their situation might be. There is no possible position, it is said, which he did not take into calculation. His officers were thus fully acquainted with his principles of tactics; and such was his confidence in their abilities, that the only thing determined upon, in case they should find the French at anchor, was for the ships to form as most convenient for their mutual support, and to anchor by the stern. "First gain the victory," he said, "and then make the best use of it you can." The moment he perceived the position of the French, that intuitive genius with which Nelson was endowed displayed itself; and it instantly struck him, that where there was room for an enemy's ship to swing, there was room for one of ours to anchor. The plan which he intended to pursue, therefore, was to keep entirely on the outer side of the French line, and station his ships, as far as he was able, one on the outer bow, and another on the outer quarter, of each of the enemy's. This plan of doubling on the enemy's ships was projected by Lord Hood, when he designed to attack the French fleet at their anchorage in Gourjean Road. Lord Hood found it impossible to make the attempt; but the thought was not lost upon Nelson, who acknowledged himself, on this occasion, indebted for it to his old and excellent commander. Capt. Berry, when he comprehended the scope of the design, exclaimed with transport, "If we succeed, what will the world say?"—"There is no *if* in the case," replied the admiral: "that we shall succeed is certain: who may live to tell the story is a very different question."

As the squadron advanced, they were assailed by a shower of shot and shells from the batteries on the island, and the enemy opened a steady fire from the starboard side of their whole line, within half gunshot distance, full into the bows of our van ships. It was received in silence: the men on board every ship were employed aloft in furling sails, and below in tending the braces, and making ready for anchoring. A miserable sight for the French; who, with all their skill, and all their courage, and all their advantages of numbers and situation, were upon that element on which, when the hour of trial comes, a Frenchman has no hope. Admiral

Brueys was a brave and able man; yet the indelible character of his country broke out in one of his letters, wherein he delivered it as his private opinion, that the English had missed him, because, not being superior in force, they did not think it prudent to try their strength with him. The moment was now come in which he was to be undeceived.

A French brig was instructed to decoy the English, by manœuvring so as to tempt them toward a shoal lying off the island of Bekier; but Nelson either knew the danger or suspected some deceit; and the lure was unsuccessful. Captain Foley led the way in the Goliath, outsailing the Zealous, which for some minutes disputed this post of honour with him. He had long conceived that if the enemy were moored in line of battle in with the land, the best plan of attack would be, to lead between them and the shore, because the French guns on that side were not likely to be manned, nor even ready for action. Intending, therefore, to fix himself on the inner bow of the *Guerrier*, he kept as near the edge of the bank as the depth of water would admit; but his anchor hung, and having opened his fire, he drifted to the second ship, the *Conquérant*, before it was clear; then anchored by the stern, inside of her, and in ten minutes shot away her mast. Hood, in the Zealous, perceiving this, took the station which the Goliath intended to have occupied, and totally disabled the *Guerrier* in twelve minutes. The third ship which doubled the enemy's van was the Orion, Sir J. Saumarez; she passed to windward of the Zealous, and opened her larboard guns as long as they bore on the *Guerrier;* then passing inside the Goliath, sunk a frigate which annoyed her, hauled round toward the French line, and anchoring inside, between the fifth and sixth ships from the *Guerrier*, took her station on the larboard bow of the *Franklin*, and the quarter of the *Peuple Souverain*, receiving and returning the fire of both. The sun was now nearly down. The Audacious, Captain Gould, pouring a heavy fire into the *Guerrier* and the *Conquérant*, fixed herself on the larboard bow of the latter, and when that ship struck, passed on to the *Peuple Souverain*. The Theseus, Capt. Miller, followed, brought down the *Guerrier's* remaining main and mizen-masts, then anchored inside of the *Spartiate*, the third in the French line.

While these advanced ships doubled the French line, the

Vanguard was the first that anchored on the outer side of the enemy, within half pistol-shot of their third ship, the *Spartiate.* Nelson had six colours flying in different parts of his rigging, lest they should be shot away; that they should be struck, no British admiral considers as a possibility. He veered half a cable, and instantly opened a tremendous fire; under cover of which the other four ships of his division, the Minotaur, Bellerophon, Defence, and Majestic, sailed on ahead of the admiral. In a few minutes, every man stationed at the first six guns in the forepart of the Vanguard's deck was killed or wounded. These guns were three times cleared. Capt. Louis, in the Minotaur, anchored just ahead, and took off the fire of the *Aquilon*, the fourth in the enemy's line. The Bellerophon, Capt. Darby, passed ahead, and dropped her stern anchor on the starboard bow of the *Orient*, seventh in the line, Brueys' own ship, of one hundred and twenty guns, whose difference of force was in proportion of more than seven to three, and whose weight of ball, from the lower deck alone, exceeded that from the whole broadside of the Bellerophon. Capt. Peyton, in the Defence, took his station ahead of the Minotaur, and engaged the *Franklin*, the sixth in the line, by which judicious movement the British line remained unbroken. The Majestic, Capt. Westcott, got entangled with the main rigging of one of the French ships astern of the *Orient*, and suffered dreadfully from that three-decker's fire; but she swung clear, and closely engaging the *Heureux*, the ninth ship on the starboard bow, received also the fire of the *Tonnant*, which was the eighth in the line. The other four ships of the British squadron, having been detached previous to the discovery of the French, were at a considerable distance when the action began. It commenced at half after six; about seven, night closed, and there was no other light than that from the fire of the contending fleets.

Trowbridge, in the Culloden, then foremost of the remaining ships, was two leagues astern. He came on sounding, as the others had done; as he advanced, the increasing darkness increased the difficulty of the navigation; and suddenly, after having found eleven fathoms water, before the lead could be hove again he was fast aground; nor could all his own exertions, joined with those of the Leander and the Mutine brig, which came to his assistance, get him off in time to bear

a part in the action. His ship, however, served as a beacon to the Alexander and Swiftsure, which would else, from the course which they were holding, have gone considerably farther on the reef, and must inevitably have been lost. These ships entered the bay, and took their stations in the darkness, in a manner still spoken of with admiration by all who remember it. Captain Hallowell, in the Swiftsure, as he was bearing down, fell in with what seemed to be a strange sail. Nelson had directed his ships to hoist four lights horizontally at the mizen peak, as soon as it became dark; and this vessel had no such distinction. Hallowell, however, with great judgment, ordered his men not to fire: if she was an enemy, he said, she was in too disabled a state to escape; but, from her sails being loose, and the way in which her head was, it was probable she might be an English ship. It was the Bellerophon, overpowered by the huge *Orient*: her lights had gone overboard, nearly two hundred of her crew were killed or wounded, all her masts and cables had been shot away; and she was drifting out of the line toward the leeside of the bay. Her station, at this important time, was occupied by the Swiftsure, which opened a steady fire on the quarter of the *Franklin* and the bows of the French admiral. At the same instant, Captain Ball, with the Alexander, passed under his stern, and anchored within side on his larboard quarter, raking him, and keeping up a severe fire of musketry upon his decks. The last ship which arrived to complete the destruction of the enemy was the Leander. Captain Thompson, finding that nothing could be done that night to get off the Culloden, advanced with the intention of anchoring athwart-hawse of the *Orient*. The *Franklin* was so near her ahead, that there was not room for him to pass clear of the two; he therefore took his station athwart-hawse of the latter, in such a position as to rake both.

The two first ships of the French line had been dismasted within a quarter of an hour after the commencement of the action; and the others had in that time suffered so severely that victory was already certain. The third, fourth, and fifth, were taken possession of at half past eight. Meantime Nelson received a severe wound on the head from a piece of langridge shot. Captain Berry caught him in his arms as he was falling. The great effusion of blood occasioned

an apprehension that the wound was mortal: Nelson himself thought so: a large flap of the skin of the forehead, cut from the bone, had fallen over one eye; and the other being blind, he was in total darkness. When he was carried down, the surgeon—in the midst of a scene scarcely to be conceived by those who have never seen a cockpit in time of action, and the heroism which is displayed amid its horrors,—with a natural and pardonable eagerness, quitted the poor fellow then under his hands, that he might instantly attend the admiral. "No!" said Nelson, "I will take my turn with my brave fellows." Nor would he suffer his own wound to be examined till every man who had been previously wounded was properly attended to. Fully believing that the wound was mortal, and that he was about to die, as he had ever desired, in battle and in victory, he called the chaplain, and desired him to deliver what he supposed to be his dying remembrance to Lady Nelson; he then sent for Capt. Louis on board from the Minotaur, that he might thank him personally for the great assistance which he had rendered to the Vanguard; and ever mindful of those who deserved to be his friends, appointed Capt. Hardy from the brig to the command of his own ship, Capt. Berry having to go home with the news of the victory. When the surgeon came in due time to examine his wound (for it was in vain to entreat him to let it be examined sooner), the most anxious silence prevailed; and the joy of the wounded men, and of the whole crew, when they heard that the hurt was merely superficial, gave Nelson deeper pleasure than the unexpected assurance that his life was in no danger. The surgeon requested, and as far as he could, ordered him to remain quiet; but Nelson could not rest. He called for his secretary, Mr. Campbell, to write the despatches. Campbell had himself been wounded; and was so affected at the blind and suffering state of the admiral that he was unable to write. The chaplain was then sent for; but, before he came, Nelson, with his characteristic eagerness took the pen, and contrived to trace a few words, marking his devout sense of the success which had already been obtained. He was now left alone; when suddenly a cry was heard on the deck, that the *Orient* was on fire. In the confusion he found his way up, unassisted and unnoticed; and, to the astonishment of every one appeared on the

quarter deck, where he immediately gave order that the boats should be sent to the relief of the enemy.

It was soon after nine that the fire on board the *Orient* broke out. Brueys was dead: he had received three wounds, yet would not leave his post: a fourth cut him almost in two. He desired not to be carried below, but to be left to die upon deck. The flames soon mastered his ship. Her sides had just been painted; and the oil-jars and paint-bucket were lying on the poop. By the prodigious light of this conflagration, the situation of the two fleets could now be perceived, the colours of both being clearly distinguishable. About ten o'clock the ship blew up, with a shock which was felt to the very bottom of every vessel. Many of her officers and men jumped overboard, some clinging to the spars and pieces of wreck with which the sea was strewn, others swimming to escape from the destruction which they momently dreaded. Some were picked up by our boats; and some even in the heat and fury of the action were dragged into the lower ports of the nearest British ships by the British sailors. The greater part of her crew, however, stood the danger till the last, and continued to fire from the lower deck. This tremendous explosion was followed by a silence not less awful: the firing immediately ceased on both sides; and the first sound which broke the silence, was the dash of her shattered masts and yards, falling into the water from the vast height to which they had been exploded. It is upon record that a battle between two armies was once broken off by an earthquake. Such an event would be felt like a miracle; but no incident in war, produced by human means, has ever equalled the sublimity of this co-instantaneous pause, and all its circumstances.

About seventy of the *Orient's* crew were saved by the English boats. Among the many hundreds who perished were the Commodore Casa-Bianca, and his son, a brave boy, only ten years old. They were seen floating on a shattered mast when the ship blew up. She had money on board (the plunder of Malta) to the amount of £600,000 sterling. The masses of burning wreck, which were scattered by the explosion, excited for some moments apprehensions in the English which they had never felt from any other danger. Two large pieces fell into the main and fore-tops of the Swiftsure without injuring any person. A port-fire also

fell into the main-royal of the Alexander; the fire which it occasioned was speedily extinguished. Capt. Ball had provided, as far as human foresight could provide, against any such danger. All the shrouds and sails of his ship, not absolutely necessary for its immediate management, were thoroughly wetted, and so rolled up, that they were as hard and as little inflammable as so many solid cylinders.

The firing recommenced with the ships to leeward of the centre, and continued till about three. At daybreak, the *Guillaume Tell* and the *Genereux*, the two rear ships of the enemy, were the only French ships of the line which had their colours flying; they cut their cables in the forenoon, not having been engaged, and stood out to sea, and two frigates with them. The Zealous pursued; but as there was no other ship in a condition to support Captain Hood, he was recalled. It was generally believed by the officers that if Nelson had not been wounded not one of these ships could have escaped. The four certainly could not if the Culloden had got into action; and if the frigates belonging to the squadron had been present, not one of the enemy's fleet would have left Aboukir Bay. These four vessels, however, were all that escaped; and the victory was the most complete and glorious in the annals of naval history. "Victory," said Nelson, "is not a name strong enough for such a scene:" he called it a conquest. Of thirteen sail of the line nine were taken and two burned. Of the four frigates, one was sunk, another, the Artemise, was burned, in a villanous manner, by her captain, M. Estandlet, who, having fired a broadside at the Theseus, struck his colours, then set fire to the ship, and escaped with most of his crew to shore. The British loss, in killed and wounded, amounted to eight hundred and ninety-five. Westcott was the only captain who fell; three thousand one hundred and five of the French, including the wounded, were sent on shore by cartel, and five thousand two hundred and twenty-five perished.

As soon as the conquest was completed, Nelson sent orders through the fleet to return thanksgiving in every ship for the victory with which Almighty God had blessed his majesty's arms. The French at Rosetta, who with miserable fear beheld the engagement, were at a loss to understand the stillness of the fleet during the performance of this solemn duty;

but it seemed to affect many of the prisoners, officers as well as men; and graceless and godless as the officers were, some of them remarked that it was no wonder such order was preserved in the British navy, when the minds of our men could be impressed with such sentiments after so great a victory, and at a moment of such confusion. The French at Rosetta, seeing their four ships sail out of the Bay unmolested, endeavoured to persuade themselves that they were in possession of the place of battle. But it was in vain thus to attempt, against their own secret and certain conviction, to deceive themselves; and even if they could have succeeded in this, the bonfires, which the Arabs kindled along the whole coast, and over the country, for the three following nights, would soon have undeceived them. Thousands of Arabs and Egyptians lined the shore, and covered the house tops during the action, rejoicing in the destruction which had overtaken their invaders. Long after the battle, innumerable bodies were seen floating about the bay, in spite of all the exertions which were made to sink them, as well from fear of pestilence as from the loathing and horror which the sight occasioned. Great numbers were cast up upon the Isle of Bekier, (Nelson's Island, as it has since been called,) and our sailors raised mounds of sand over them. Even after an interval of nearly three years Dr. Clarke saw them, and assisted in interring heaps of human bodies, which, having been thrown up by the sea, where there were no jackals to devour them, presented a sight loathsome to humanity. The shore, for an extent of four leagues, was covered with wreck; and the Arabs found employment for many days in burning on the beach the fragments which were cast up, for the sake of the iron.* Part of the *Orient's* main-mast was picked up by the Swiftsure. Capt. Hallowell ordered his carpenter to make a coffin of it; the iron, as well as the wood, was taken from the wreck of the same ship; it was finished as well and handsomely as the workman's skill and materials would permit; and Hallowell then sent it to the admiral with the following letter:—" Sir, I have taken the liberty of presenting you a coffin made from

* During his long subsequent cruise off Alexandria, Capt. Hallowell kept his crew employed and amused in fishing up the small anchors in the road, which, with the iron found on the masts, was afterwards sold at Rhodes, and the produce applied to purchase vegetables and tobacco for the ship's company.

the main-mast of *l'Orient*, that when you have finished your military career in this world, you may be buried in one of your trophies. But that that period may be far distant is the earnest wish of your sincere friend, Benjamin Hallowell."—An offering so strange, and yet so suited to the occasion, was received by Nelson in the spirit with which it was sent. As if he felt it good for him, now that he was at the summit of his wishes, to have death before his eyes, he ordered the coffin to be placed upright in his cabin. Such a piece of furniture, however, was more suitable to his own feelings than to those of his guests and attendants; and an old favourite servant entreated him so earnestly to let it be removed, that at length he consented to have the coffin carried below; but he gave strict orders that it should be safely stowed, and reserved for the purpose for which its brave and worthy donor had designed it.

The victory was complete; but Nelson could not pursue it as he would have done, for want of means. Had he been provided with small craft, nothing could have prevented the destruction of the storeships and transports in the port of Alexandria: four bomb-vessels would at that time have burned the whole in a few hours. "Were I to die this moment," said he in his despatches to the Admiralty, "*want of frigates* would be found stamped on my heart! No words of mine can express what I have suffered, and am suffering, for want of them." He had also to bear up against great bodily suffering: the blow had so shaken his head, that from its constant and violent aching, and the perpetual sickness which accompanied the pain, he could scarcely persuade himself that the skull was not fractured. Had it not been for Trowbridge, Ball, Hood, and Hallowell, he declared that he should have sunk under the fatigue of refitting the squadron. "All," he said, "had done well; but these officers were his supporters." But, amidst his sufferings and exertions, Nelson could yet think of all the consequences of his victory; and that no advantage from it might be lost, he despatched an officer over land to India, with letters to the governor of Bombay, informing him of the arrival of the French in Egypt, the total destruction of their fleet, and the consequent preservation of India from any attempt against it on the part of this formidable armament. "He knew that Bombay," he said, "was their first object, if they could get

there; but he trusted that Almighty God would overthrow in Egypt these pests of the human race. Buonaparte had never yet had to contend with an English officer, and he would endeavour to make him respect us." This despatch he sent upon his own responsibility, with letters of credit upon the East India Company, addressed to the British consuls, vice-consuls, and merchants on his route; Nelson saying, "that if he had done wrong, he hoped the bills would be paid, and he would repay the Company; for, as an Englishman, he should be proud that it had been in his power to put our settlements on their guard." The information which by this means reached India was of great importance. Orders had just been received for defensive preparations, upon a scale proportionate to the apprehended danger; and the extraordinary expenses which would otherwise have been incurred were thus prevented.

Nelson was now at the summit of glory: congratulations, rewards, and honours, were showered upon him by all the states, and princes, and powers to whom his victory gave a respite. The first communication of this nature which he received was from the Turkish sultan; who, as soon as the invasion of Egypt was known, had called upon "all true believers to take arms against those swinish infidels the French, that they might deliver these blessed habitations from their accursed hands;" and who had ordered his "pashas to turn night into day in their efforts to take vengeance." The present of "his imperial majesty, the powerful, formidable, and most magnificent Grand Seignior," was a pelisse of sables, with broad sleeves, valued at five thousand dollars; and a diamond aigrette, valued at eighteen thousand; the most honourable badge among the Turks; and in this instance more especially honourable, because it was taken from one of the royal turbans. "If it were worth a million," said Nelson to his wife, "my pleasure would be to see it in your possession." The sultan also sent, in a spirit worthy of imitation, a purse of two thousand sequins, to be distributed among the wounded. The mother of the sultan sent him a box, set with dimonds, valued at one thousand pounds. The czar Paul, in whom the better part of his strangely compounded nature at this time predominated, presented him with his portrait, set in diamonds, in a gold box, accompanied with a letter of congratulation, written by his own hand.

The king of Sardinia also wrote to him, and sent a gold box set with dimonds. Honours in profusion were awaiting him at Naples. In his own country the king granted these honourable augmentations to his armorial ensign: a chief undulated, *argent:* thereon waves of the sea; from which a palm tree issuant, between a disabled ship on the dexter, and a ruinous battery on the sinister, all proper; and for his crest, on a naval crown, *or*, the chelengk, or plume, presented to him by the Turk, with the motto, *Palmam qui meruit ferat.** And to his supporters, being a sailor on the dexter, and a lion on the sinister, were given these honourable augmentations; a palm branch in the sailor's hand, and another in the paw of the lion, both proper; with a tri-coloured flag and staff in the lion's mouth. He was created Baron Nelson of the Nile, and of Burnham Thorpe, with a pension of £2,000, for his own life, and those of his two immediate successors. When the grant was moved in the House of Commons, General Walpole expressed an opinion that a higher degree of rank ought to be conferred. Mr. Pitt made answer, that he thought it needless to enter into that question. "Admiral Nelson's fame," he said, "would be co-equal with the British name; and it would be remembered that he had obtained the greatest naval victory on record, when no man would think of asking, whether he had been created a baron, a viscount, or an earl." It was strange that, in the very act of conferring a title, the minister should have excused himself for not having conferred a higher one, by representing all titles, on such an occasion, as nugatory and superfluous. True, indeed, whatever title had been bestowed, whether viscount, earl, marquis, duke, or prince, if our laws had so permitted, he who received it would have been Nelson still. That name he had ennobled beyond all addition of nobility; it was the name by which England loved him, France feared him, Italy, Egypt, and Turkey celebrated him; and by which

* It has been erroneously said that the motto was selected by the King:—It was fixed on by Lord Grenville, and taken from an ode of Jortin's. The application was singularly fortunate: and the ode itself breathes a spirit in which no man ever more truly sympathised than Nelson.

Concurrant paribus cum ratibus rates,
Spectent numina ponti, et
Palmam qui meruit ferat.

he will continue to be known while the present kingdoms and languages of the world endure, and as long as their history after them shall be held in remembrance. It depended upon the degree of rank what should be the fashion of his coronet, in what page of the red book his name was to be inserted, and what precedency should be allowed his lady in the drawing-room and at the ball. That Nelson's honours were affected thus far, and no farther, might be conceded to Mr. Pitt and his colleagues in administration; but the degree of rank which they thought proper to allot was the measure of their gratitude,* though not of his services. This Nelson felt, and this he expressed, with indignation, among his friends.

Whatever may have been the motives of the ministry, and whatever the formalities with which they excused their conduct to themselves, the importance and magnitude of the victory were universally acknowledged. A grant of £10,000 was voted to Nelson by the East India Company; the Turkish Company presented him with a piece of plate; the city of London presented a sword to him, and to each of his captains; gold medals were distributed to the captains; and the first lieutenants of all the ships were promoted, as had been done after Lord Howe's victory. Nelson was exceedingly anxious that the captain and first lieutenant of the Culloden should not be passed over because of their misfortune. To Trowbridge himself he said, "Let us rejoice that the ship which got on shore was commanded by an officer whose character is so thoroughly established." To the Admiralty he stated that Captain Trowbridge's conduct

* Mr. Windham must be exempted from this well-deserved censure. He, whose fate it seems to have been almost always to think and feel more generously than those with whom he acted, declared, when he contended against his own party for Lord Wellington's peerage, that he always thought Lord Nelson had been inadequately rewarded. The case was the more flagrant because an earldom had so lately been granted for the battle of St. Vincent—an action which could never be compared with the battle of the Nile, if the very different manner in which it was rewarded did not necessarily force a comparison, especially when the part which Nelson bore in it was considered. Lords Duncan and St. Vincent had each a pension of £1,000 from the Irish Government. This was not granted to Nelson in consequence of the Union: though, surely, it would be more becoming to increase the British grant than to save a thousand a year by the Union in such cases.

was as fully entitled to praise as that of any one officer in the squadron, and as highly deserving of reward. "It was Trowbridge," said he, "who equipped the squadron so soon at Syracuse; it was Trowbridge who exerted himself for me after the action; it was Trowbridge who saved the Culloden, when none that I know in the service would have attempted it." The gold medal, therefore, by the king's express desire, was given to Captain Trowbridge, "for his services both before and since, and for the great and wonderful exertion which he made at the time of the action, in saving and getting off his ship." The private letter from the Admiralty to Nelson informed him that the first lieutenants of all the ships *engaged* were to be promoted. Nelson instantly wrote to the commander-in-chief: "I sincerely hope," said he, "this is not intended to exclude the first lieutenant of the Culloden. For heaven's sake—for my sake, if it be so—get it altered. Our dear friend Trowbridge has endured enough. His sufferings were, in every respect, more than any of us." To the Admiralty he wrote in terms equally warm. "I hope, and believe, the word *engaged* is not intended to exclude the Culloden. The merit of that ship, and her gallant captain, are too well known to benefit by anything I could say. Her misfortune was great in getting aground, while her more fortunate companions were in the full tide of happiness. No: I am confident that my good Lord Spencer will never add misery to misfortune. Captain Trowbridge on shore is superior to captains afloat: in the midst of his great misfortunes he made those signals which prevented certainly the Alexander and Swiftsure from running on the shoals. I beg your pardon for writing on a subject which, I verily believe, has never entered your lordship's head; but my heart, as it ought to be, is warm to my gallant friends." Thus feelingly alive was Nelson to the claims, and interests, and feelings of others. The Admiralty replied, that the exception was necessary, as the ship had not been in action; but they desired the commander-in-chief to promote the lieutenant upon the first vacancy which should occur.

Nelson, in remembrance of an old and uninterrupted friendship, appointed Alexander Davison sole prize agent for the captured ships: upon which Davison ordered medals to be struck in gold, for the captains; in silver, for the

lieutenants, and warrant officers; in gilt metal, for the petty officers; and in copper, for the seamen and marines. The cost of this act of liberality amounted nearly to £2,000. It is worthy of record on another account;—for some of the gallant men, who received no other honorary badge of their conduct on that memorable day, than this copper medal, from a private individual, years afterwards, when they died upon a foreign station, made it their last request, that the medals might carefully be sent home to their respective friends. So sensible are brave men of honour, in whatever rank they may be placed.

Three of the frigates, whose presence would have been so essential a few weeks sooner, joined the squadron on the twelfth day after the action. The fourth joined a few days after them. Nelson thus received despatches, which rendered it necessary for him to return to Naples. Before he left Egypt he burned three of the prizes; they could not have been fitted for a passage to Gibraltar in less than a month, and that at a great expense, and with the loss of the service of at least two sail of the line. "I rest assured," he said to the Admiralty, "that they will be paid for, and have held out that assurance to the squadron. For if an admiral, after a victory, is to look after the captured ships, and not to the distressing of the enemy, very dearly, indeed, must the nation pay for the prizes. I trust that £60,000 will be deemed a very moderate sum for them; and when the services, time, and men, with the expense of fitting the three ships for a voyage to England, are considered, government will save nearly as much as they are valued at.—Paying for prizes," he continued, "is no new idea of mine, and would often prove an amazing saving to the state, even without taking into calculation what the nation loses by the attention of admirals to the property of the captors; an attention absolutely necessary, as a recompence for the exertions of the officers and men. An admiral may be amply rewarded by his own feelings, and by the approbation of his superiors; but what reward have the inferior officers and men, but the value of the prizes? If an admiral takes that from them, on any consideration, he cannot expect to be well supported." To Earl St. Vincent he said, "If he could have been sure that Government would have paid a reasonable value for them, he would have ordered two of the other

prizes to be burnt, for they would cost more in refitting, and by the loss of ships attending them, than they were worth."

945 Having sent the six remaining prizes forward, under Sir James Saumarez, Nelson left Capt. Hood, in the Zealous off Alexandria, with the Swiftsure, Goliath, Alcmene, Zealous, and Emerald, and stood out to sea himself on the seventeenth day after the battle.*

* "Some French officers, during the blockade of Alexandria, were sent off to Capt. Hallowell to offer a supply of vegetables, and observe, of course, the state of the blockading squadron. They were received with all possible civility. In the course of conversation after dinner, one of them remarked that we had made use of unfair weapons during the action, by which probably the Orient was burnt, and that General Buonaparte had expressed great indignation at it. In proof of this assertion, he stated that in the late gun-boat attacks, their camp had twice been set on fire by balls of unextinguishable matter which were fired from one of the English boats. Captain Hallowell instantly ordered the gunner to bring up some of those balls, and asked him from whence he had them. To the confusion of the accusers, he related that they were found on board of the Spartiate, one of the ships captured on the 1st of August. As these balls were distinguished by particular marks, though, in other respects, alike, the captain ordered an experiment to be made, in order to ascertain the nature of them. The next morning, says Mr. Willyams, I accompanied Mr. Parr, the gunner, to the island. The first we tried proved to be a fire-ball, but of what materials composed we could not ascertain. As it did not explode (which at first we apprehended), we rolled it into the sea, where it continued to burn under water; a black pitchy substance exuding from it till only an iron skeleton of a shell remained. The whole had been carefully crusted over with a substance that gave it the appearance of a perfect shell. On setting fire to the fusee of the other, which was differently marked, it burst into many pieces: though somewhat alarmed, fortunately none of us were hurt. People account differently for the fire that happened on board of the French admiral; but why may it not have arisen from some of these fire-balls, left, perhaps, carelessly on the poop or cabin when it first broke out? And what confirms my opinion on this head is, that several pieces of such shells were found sticking in the Bellerophon, which she most probably received from the first fire of l'Orient."—*Willyam's Voyages in the Mediterranean*, p. 145.